A CASE STUDY: UNDERSTANDING FIFTH-GRADE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES WITH CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

by

Margo E. Frizzell

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Dissertation Committee:
Sally Beisser, Ph.D., Chair
Catherine Gillespie, Ph.D.
Greg Carenza, Ed.D.

Dean of the School of Education:
Janet M. McMahill, Ph.D.

Drake University

Des Moines, Iowa

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ABSTRACT

Problem: This study explored the experience of fifth-grade students with conflict transformation. A large body of quantitative research supports the premise that direct instruction in non-violent conflict intervention decreases aggression in elementary schools (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, & Acikgoz, 2001) and improves peer relationships (Joshi, 2008). However, there is a dearth of qualitative research literature exploring elementary student experiences with interventions based on conflict transformation.

Procedure: The research question guiding this study was "What are the experiences of fifth-grade students as they learn about conflict transformation?" A holistic single case study (Creswell, 2012) was conducted to understand student experiences with a team-taught, 12-lesson, peace education unit based on conflict transformation. The unit was developed collaboratively with the classroom teacher, grounded in the conflict transformation conceptual framework (Lederach, 2003), and integrated with the classroom curriculum. Each of the unit lessons was 60 minutes in length, and designed to build knowledge and skills related to one of the three inquiries within the conflict transformation framework. Participants included twenty 10 and 11-year-old students and one classroom teacher in a rural, Midwest elementary school. Data collection included two transcribed student focus groups and two teacher interviews. Observational field notes were collected. Data from observations included student art, journal entries, and role-play. Triangulation of data included the focus groups, interviews, participant observation field notes, observation field notes, and student work samples. Data analysis included a codification process (Corbin & Strauss, 2007) to elicit themes and commonalities from the data.

Findings: Outcomes of this study included overall positive student reception to conflict transformation concepts and skills during classroom activities. Nevertheless, students experienced anxiety about applying them to daily life. Each set of responses to the lessons illuminated student experiences with one or more of the three inquiries of the conflict transformation framework. Four themes emerged from the data. The first theme, strengthening literacy and relationship skills, revealed that the conflict transformation strategies bolstered these skills. The second theme, increase of student understanding of conflict, demonstrated positive changes in student perceptions of themselves, their classmates, and the classroom culture as a result of the lessons. The third theme, that students were ambivalent about adult arbitration, suggested students appreciated teacher intervention because they felt secure in knowing the outcome would be enforced and fair. However, they felt disempowered by not having the opportunity to solve problems themselves. The final theme indicated that students felt vulnerable when resolving conflict. Students felt insecure about possible negative reception from others when they attempted to use their new conflict intervention skills.

Implications: Educators need to ensure students feel secure and simultaneously encourage independence as students solve problems. This study impacts the existing literature by exploring how a particular conflict intervention framework, not previously applied to the elementary school context, impacted a classroom. An implication for researchers is to recognize the importance of the qualitative approach in discovering these findings, and to seek student voice and input whenever possible on issues that directly affect them.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Unresolved conflict between students in the school setting has serious consequences that touch every aspect of school, community, and family life. Students who cannot resolve interpersonal conflicts non-violently and thoroughly are unable to build healthy relationships with their peers and often experience rejection and isolation (Joshi, 2008; Shipman, Zeman, Nesin, & Fitzgerald, 2003; Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003; Johnson, D., Johnson,R., Dudley, & Magnuson, 1995; Gassin, Enright, & Knutson, 2005; Crick & Dodge, 1996). These conflicts cause loss of instructional time for teachers as they arbitrate disputes (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013). Un-resolved conflictual situations can devolve into violence and bullying without intervention or response. It is widely known that bullying has been a severe issue for public schools in recent years (www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention, 2013).

Researchers (Cunningham, C., Cunningham, L., Martorelli, Tran, Young & Zacharias, 1998; Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003; MacEvoy & Asher, 2012) have been considering the effect of non-violent intervention programs in public schools for decades. They have repeatedly found that educating students in emotional literacy, communication skills, and integrative negotiation tactics decreases violence in schools. More recently, researchers have begun exploring student experience of these programs (Sellman, 2011). However, there is a dearth of knowledge of the impact of non-violent conflict intervention on elementary age students. Additionally, discussion regarding Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework focuses almost exclusively on state and systemic conflicts. Exploration of how this framework influences children in classrooms is needed because conflict transformation addresses aspects of intervention such as root causes and long-term solutions (Lederach, 2003). The primary concern

of conflict resolution is to end the conflict and often does not speak to these and other important aspects of non-violent conflict intervention that would strengthen peer relationships among students.

Problem Statement

Peer relationships are important to student success. "Two decades of empirical research have shown that children's success or failure in being accepted by peers is determined in part by their skill in social problem solving" (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003, p. 153). Children who develop non-aggressive ways to resolve interpersonal conflicts or non-violent conflict intervention strategies, are more likely to be accepted by their peers (Joshi, 2008; Shipman et al., 2003; Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003; Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, & Magnuson, 1995; Gassin, Enright, & Knutson, 2005; Crick & Dodge, 1996). A lack of knowledge in non-violent intervention strategies undermines peer relationships.

> Even in schools where weapons are rare, students often try to resolve conflicts by using destructive strategies, such as verbal threats, withdrawal, telling the teacher and restating demands. Most students seem unaware and ignorant of steps that would allow them to manage conflicts constructively. (Johnson et al., 1995, p. 673)

It is, therefore, important to fill this gap of knowledge about how children solve interpersonal problems and how they can manage conflicts constructively. Negative attitudes toward conflict are not constructive. In fact, conflict can be an opportunity for growth (Stevahn, Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Schultz, 2002). Students need to understand this in order to tackle conflict in productive ways.

Poor peer relationships are one factor associated with an increased likelihood of being involved in bullying (www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention, 2013). Bullying occurs in every context;

large cities, small towns, and even one-room school houses (Beane, 2011). According to The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention (2013), 23% of public schools reported bullying incidents daily or weekly. As cited by Beane (2011), The National Association of School Psychologists states that 160,000 students are absent from school due to bullying every day.

Students who lack pro-social behaviors cause significant stress for teachers as well as limit their ability to teach (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013). Teaching non-violent conflict intervention strategies in the classroom improves these social skills and decreases stress for teachers and students. Coping with stress involves two main components: stressor and strategy (Brenner & Salovey, 1997). Any occurrence that arouses concern in a child is a stressor. Efforts to address the concern are considered strategy. The more strategies a child has at their disposal in coping with stress, the better their emotion regulation. "Successful coping or emotion regulation is determined by the range of strategies that meet the demands of particular stressors, and the ability to implement these strategies" (Brenner & Salovey, 1997, p. 170). Additionally, children who have mastered non-violent conflict intervention strategies are more resilient and abler to withstand peer pressures and violence (Lane-Garon, 2000). Emotion regulation is integral to the non-violent conflict intervention process. How students manage anger with their peers is an essential part of forming positive relationships. "Recent evidence suggests that anger interferes with adequate solution of the two main developmental tasks of childhood; establishing positive relationships and achieving academically" (Gassin et al., 2005, p. 321).

There exists an abundance of quantitative research that supports training for children in the areas that define non-violent conflict intervention education such as emotional literacy (Figueroa-Sanchez, 2008; Coppock, 2007), anger management, communication (Bierman &

Furman, 1984; Kaufman, Prelock, Weiler, & Creaghead, 1994), mediation, and problem solving. This training is a positive way to decrease violence and improve peer relationships in schools (Aceves, Hinshaw, Mendoza-Denton, & Page-Gould, 2010; Borbely, Graber, Nichols, Brooks-Gunn, & Botvin, 2005; Cunningham et al., 1998; Johnson et al., 1995; Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, & Acikgoz, 2001; Lane-Garon, 2000; Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003; MacEvoy & Asher, 2012; Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003; McGregor, 1993; Sağkal, Türnüklü, & Totan, 2012; Shipman et al., 2003; Stevahn, Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Oberle, & Wahl, 2000; Stevahn, Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Schultz, 2002) . These studies identify a decrease in school violence as a result of peer mediation and conflict resolution programs. Interventions include direct instruction, role play, and mentoring. Some of the studies integrate training with classroom curriculum (Stevahn et al., 2000) while others involve workshops outside the regular academic content. The programs that integrate non-violent conflict intervention education with school curriculum are considered more effective (Stevahn et al., 2000). Integration also improves academic performance in the content area. It is a symbiotic relationship (Stevahn et al., 2000).

A common theme in qualitative studies on conflict resolution and peer mediation programs (Basar & Akan, 2013; Theobald & Danby, 2012; Sellman, 2011; Gibbons, 2010; Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006; Lindsay, 1998) is the tendency of teachers to solve problems for students and the student disempowerment that ensues. “When a conflict is arbitrated, the ‘story’ of a pupil’s conflict is told to them by an adult. This reinforces the notion that their conflict is something over which they have little or no control or authority” (Sellman, 2011, p. 57). While teacher arbitration is a common approach to conflict in schools (Basar & Akan, 2013), non-violent conflict intervention training and peer mediation is more empowering for students.

As summarized above, there is a solid basis for believing that non-violent conflict intervention education positively impacts student relationships, stress levels, and violence in schools. However, there is less known about experience with training these processes. Three qualitative research groups (Basar & Akan, 2013; Gibbons, 2010; Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006) addressed student voices directly. The remainder of the qualitative researchers identified above addressed student experience through the interpretation of adults. To better understand how students make sense out of non-violent conflict intervention training and processes in school it is important to investigate student interpretations in their own words.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this case study is to explore the experiences of fifth-grade students and their teacher during a peace education unit based on Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework in a public elementary school classroom. Peace education concepts include, but are not limited to, emotional literacy (Figueroa-Sanchez, 2012; Coppock, 2007), communication skills (Bierman & Furman, 1984; Kaufman et al., 1994), and integrative negotiation (Stevahn, et al., 2002; Stevahn, et al., 2000).

Research Question

The primary question of this study is "What are the experiences of fifth-grade students as they learn about conflict transformation?"

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to existing research regarding non-violent conflict intervention programs in schools. A qualitative study is needed in order to better understand the experience of fifth-grade students with the non-violent conflict intervention processes, already linked to a decrease in violence and aggression, on student and teacher perceptions. This study will address

conflict transformation in particular. There is very little known about how children experience this approach.

> We use qualitative research to follow up quantitative research and help explain the mechanisms or linkages in causal theories or models. These theories provide a general picture of trends, associations, and relationships, but they do not tell us about the processes that people experience, why they responded to us as they did, the context in which they responded, and their deeper thoughts, and behaviors that governed their responses. (Creswell, 2012, p. 48)

Through analysis of student voices regarding their experience with this peace education unit, educators can better understand how students navigate conflicts. Bullying most often occurs in the absence of attentive adults (Beane, 2011). Students must be able to find their way through bullying situations when an adult is not present. The more information teachers and school personnel have about how students think through these situations and the decisions they make, the better adults will be able to equip students to create positive peer relationships.

> Knowing how children develop coping behaviors is important for several reasons. First, from a basic science perspective, understanding the factors that influence the acquisition of various coping strategies gives us insight into why children respond to stressful situations as they do. Second, understanding the socialization influences of children's coping processes focuses our attention on potential targets of intervention aimed at increasing the efficacy of coping approaches that children use. (Kliewer, Fearnow, & Miller, 1996, p. 2339)

Teachers use student thinking and knowledge as a starting point for educating them in conflict intervention. This study will use Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework

within the context of the elementary school classroom to inform the development of curriculum and to analyze student and teacher response.

Conceptual Framework

There are many terms used in the practice of non-violent conflict intervention (Rhodes, 2008), some of them are more familiar than others. Among these terms are conflict resolution, conflict management, and conflict transformation. These terms are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes used with specific intent. Some practitioners use conflict resolution as an umbrella term with other terms as sub-terms. Other practitioners use conflict transformation in the same manner. And still others see these two terms as related but entirely different fields of thought and practice (Miall, 2004; Rhodes, 2008).

Though the terms conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation are sometimes used synonymously (Rhodes, 2008), others see them as distinct from each other in important ways (Miall, 2004). Conflict management theorists see conflict as arising between communities due to differences in values and interests. These conflicts are impossible to remove and so must be managed through suitable interventions (Miall, 2004). Conflict resolution theorists agree that communities may not be able to come to a compromise on fundamental needs and beliefs. However, communities can rise above the conflict to create an agreement through analysis and reframing with the help of neutral outside parties (Miall, 2004). Conflict transformation theorists acknowledge the structural and historical nature of a conflict. The goal is to slowly change the nature of the community from within and in the process transform the conflict (Miall, 2004).

Lederach (2003), an important figure in the field of Conflict Transformation, is the Professor of International Peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, and

a Mennonite. His comparison of conflict resolution with conflict transformation, outlined in Table 1.1, further clarifies the differences between conflict resolution and conflict transformation.

Table 1.1

Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation: A Brief Comparison Perspective

	Conflict Resolution	Conflict Transformation
The key question	How do we end something not desired?	How do we end something destructive and build something desired?
The focus	It is content-centered.	It is relationship-centered.
The purpose	To achieve an agreement and solution to the presenting problem creating the crisis.	To promote constructive change processes, inclusive of, but not limited to, immediate solutions.
The development of process	It is embedded and built around the immediacy of the relationship where the symptoms of disruptions appear.	It envisions the presenting problem as an opportunity for response to symptoms **and** engagement of systems within which relationships are embedded
The time frame	The horizon is short-term relief to pain, anxiety, and difficulties.	The horizon for change is mid-to long-range and is intentionally crisis-responsive rather than crisis-driven.
View of conflict	It envisions the need to de-escalate conflict processes.	It envisions conflict as an ecology that is relationally dynamic with ebb (conflict de-escalation to pursue constructive change) and flow (conflict escalation to pursue constructive change).[1]

Most of the research completed regarding non-violent conflict intervention in public schools uses the term conflict resolution (Basar & Akan, 2013; Borbely et al., 2005; Gibbons, 2010; Johnson et al., 2001). However, conflict transformation is more appropriate to the stated goal of public education to form young people into contributing members of a peaceful, just, democratic society (Beane, 1998). In order to meet this goal, it is not enough to end immediate

[1] From *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, by J.P. Lederach, 2003, Intercourse, PA: Good Books. 2003 by Good Books. Reprinted with permission.

conflicts (Lederach, 2003). Students must learn to think long-term and anticipate how conflicts can re-emerge continuing to undermine their relationships. It is important for them to understand conflict as a tool that can be used to create new solutions if they are to be fully active in their current and future work and social communities.

Conflict transformation addresses the entire "topography" of the conflict (Lederach, 2003, p. 8). When one only focuses on the immediate problem one can miss the underlying reasons and dynamics at play in the conflict. Lederach (2003), offers a conceptual map for transforming conflict, framed in three inquiries. These are displayed visually in figure 2. The first inquiry is the presenting situation. The issue at hand is considered. The issue must be considered as part of a larger pattern that has history. If one begins with the history that leads to a pattern that caused the issue, one arrives at the present episode of conflict. However, if one follows it the other way, beginning with the issue and then considering the patterns and history, one comes to understand the epicenter of the conflict, a deeper understanding of context. Both the episode and the epicenter must be understood for transformation to occur.

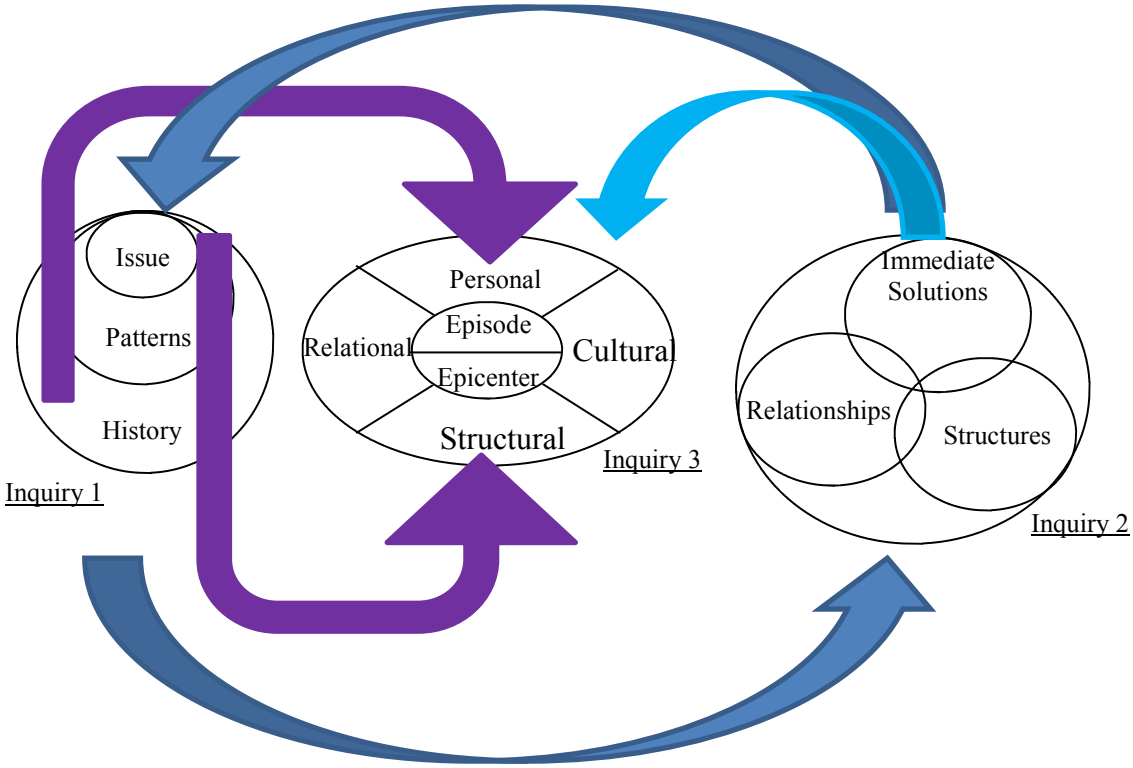
The second inquiry is a consideration of a desired future. The three components to this inquiry are immediate solutions, relationships, and structures. At this point, one begins to consider what could be, what is hoped for. While Lederach's (2003, p. 35) original figure showed the three circles as embedded, similar to the first inquiry, the circles as overlapping but not embedded are a clearer representation. Overlapping circles represent how immediate solutions, relationships, and structures are related to one another but can also be considered separately when visioning a new future.

The third inquiry is where the episode and epicenter reside, surrounded by areas where the process of change can take place. These areas are personal, relational, structural, and cultural.

> The change processes address both the episodic content and the pattern and context or epicenter. We must conceptualize multiple change processes that address solutions for immediate problems and at the same time processes that create a platform for longer-term change of relational and structural patterns. (Lederach, 2003, p. 38)

Finally, inquiry two also leads back to inquiry one; hope for the future informs the perception of the presenting situation.

Figure. 1.1 The Big Picture of Conflict Transformation[2]



Lederach (2003) identifies five capacities that are important to develop as one moves from thinking conceptually about conflict transformation to applying it. These capacities are 1) develop a capacity to see presenting issues as a window, 2) develop a capacity to integrate multiple time frames, 3) develop a capacity to pose the energies of conflict as dilemmas, 4)

[2] From *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, by J.P. Lederach, 2003 Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003 by Good Books. Adapted with permission.

develop a capacity to make complexity a friend, not a foe, and 5) develop capacity to hear and engage voices of identity.

Presenting Issues

The ability to consider the presenting issue as a window means that one has the ability to see beyond the immediate issue; to develop empathy that allows one to understand the situation of another but not get caught up in the emotions of the other and to not get caught up in the demand for immediate solutions. The metaphor of the window provides two lenses to view the conflict; the content, which is close and inside and the context, which is further out, on the other side of the glass. "This ability to look at, as well we through, permits us to develop a change-oriented process that is responsive to the immediate content and addresses the great context within which it was given birth" (Lederach, 2003, p .49).

Related to the ability to see conflict through a window is the capacity to integrate numerous time frames, meaning creating strategies that are "short-term responsive and long-term strategic" (Lederach, 2003, p. 50). The immediate conflict must be addressed and yet if the solution does not account for long-term consequences, transformation will not occur.

Presenting the energies of conflict as dilemmas means reframing either/or situations into both/and situations. Organizing the options in conflict as competing forces limits the possibilities for resolution. "We are not able to handle complexity well if we understand our choices in rigid either/or and contradictory terms" (Lederach, 2003, p. 52). When key energies in a situation can be held up as interdependent goals rather than competing forces, complex situations can be more fully addressed. "…the capacity to live with apparent contradictions and paradoxes, lies at the heart of transformation" (Lederach, 2003, p. 52). This is an important distinction between

transformation and resolution because these solutions are not necessarily logical, consistent, and neat (Lederach, 2003).

Complexity can be overwhelming but if a capacity to befriend it is built, it can be an opportunity. "…we are not limited by having too few options but by our own inability to experience the wide-range of potentials afforded by all the available choices" (Lederach, 2003, p. 54). The secret to developing this capacity is to trust and follow but never to be inflexible. One must trust the possibility that options for change can be devised and then follow those options that seem to hold the most potential for constructive change. Through the process, it is important to not become fixed on one idea or possibility (Lederach, 2003).

Identity issues are core to many conflicts. In referring back to the conflict map, Lederach (2003) outlined, it is issues of identity that are often found at the epicenter. "In my experience, issues of identify are at the root of most conflicts. Thus, a capacity to understand and respect the role of identity is essential to understanding the epicenter of conflict" (Lederach, 2003, p. 55). Identity is defined by what people value, where they come from, and what they fear. It is best understood in relation to others. Its dynamic nature initiates constant redefinition. Conflict offers a prime opportunity for this redefinition. "…when people are often filled with great fears and unknown, the challenge is to lower the level of reactivity and blame, while at the same time increasing a capacity to express a clear sense of self and place" (Lederach, 2003, p. 56).

The conflict transformation framework (Lederach, 2003) provided a basis for the peace education unit taught and informed the analysis of student experiences. This framework helped to determine student experience with immediate and long-term solutions as well as how personal, relational, structural, and cultural factors impacted their solutions to conflicts. This framework was also used to analyze conflicts that are arbitrated by teachers and other school personnel and

how the student encounter with the non-violent conflict intervention process was influenced by the arbitration.

Theoretical Perspective

The dynamic nature of the Conflict Transformation Framework makes it a good fit for the theoretical perspective for this study, social constructivism. A social constructivist believes that individuals create meaning from the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2012). Each individual negotiates his/her own meaning and so truth is complex. When conducting research as a social constructivist the researcher develops broad and open-ended questions in order to discover the truths that have been constructed by the participants. The participant's view is the most important factor to the researcher. "Thus, constructivist researchers often address the processes of interaction among individuals. They also focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work, in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of participants" (Creswell, 2012, p. 8). The research question for this project was designed to be open-ended and to draw student's experiences with conflict out. The interpretation of student responses during focus groups and the classroom provide the opportunity for determining patterns and creating meaning. The research was conducted in an elementary classroom setting, where students "live and work" for a large part of the year.

Social constructivism is an inductive process through which researchers discover patterns in the participant stories in order to construct meaning. Because of this belief, the researcher must identify the meanings that she brings with her to the research, meanings she has already constructed through her own experience (Creswell, 2012). As someone with fifteen years of experience working with elementary age students, teaching non-violent conflict intervention strategies and concepts, I brought some expectations of student response. I have taught many of

these strategies used during this unit to this particular age group on five different occasions with five different groups of students, over the past two decades. I've also taught some of these concepts in classroom and camp settings. In order to balance my perceptions and interpretations, I collaborated closely with the classroom teacher and listened closely to the actual words of the students.

Definitions

There are several definitions important to this study. The first is non-violent conflict intervention. This term refers to all approaches to solving conflicts that do not employ violence. Some researchers (Rhodes, 2008) consider arbitration violent because it exercises force. However, for the purposes of this study arbitration was considered non-violent because it does not utilize hurtful force. The following terms and definitions are important to understanding the purpose of this study.

Conflict resolution - a process in which two or more people bring a conflict to an end through non-violent means.

Conflict transformation - a process through which change occurs as two or more people analyze a conflict and collaborate to consider non-violent immediate mutually satisfying solutions as well as long-term mutually satisfying solutions that do not employ force.

Arbitration - a conflict resolution strategy where a third party intervenes, stopping the conflict and imposing a solution.

Integrative negotiation - a non-violent, non-forceful process through which two or more people come to a solution that is mutually beneficial.

Distributive negotiation - a process through which two or more people come to a solution that does not benefit all parties involved in the conflict and may or may not include force.

Peace education - any and all pedagogies that relate to peace and non-violent intervention in conflict.

Emotional literacy - the vocabulary, concepts, and skills necessary to decode emotions of self and others.

Bullying - intentional, hurtful, repeated behavior toward another person who is perceived to have less power than the aggressor.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Peace and Conflict

The Nature of Conflict

Conflict is a complex and dynamic process. Conflict has the potential to affirm and destroy life (Galtung, 1996). Conflicts develop from the contradictions that exist in the very structures of society. These conflicts become apparent through attitudes and behaviors. According to Harris and Morrison (2013), conflict is an important concept to understand if peace is to be achieved.

The definition of conflict is widely agreed upon. "Conflict is not defined as an individual's behavior, a response, or a personality trait. Rather, it takes two or more individuals to be in social conflict, one opposing the other. As such, conflict is a dyadic relation of individuals…" (Shantz, 1987, p. 285). Galtung (1998) distinguishes between two types of conflict. The first type is a dispute in which two persons or actors are pursuing the same goal (Galtung, Initiative, & Programme, 1998). The second type is a dilemma, defined as one person or actor, pursuing two incompatible goals (Galtung et al., 1998). "The description of conflict as incompatible goals and overt opposition by one person to another person's actions or statements is similar across various definitions" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000 p. 3). For the school context, conflict can be defined as two or more children engaging in verbal or physical struggle as they strive to accomplish their own goals (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000).

Conflict is inevitable (Kasik & Kumcagiz, 2014; Hakvoort, 2010). Though conflict is typically viewed as a negative event (Opotow, 1991), it is "…neither destructive nor constructive, although it can become destructive or constructive depending on how one is able to

handle it. Conflicts can be referred to as neutral" (Hakvoort, 2010, p. 160). Teachers and other adults in the school need to understand that conflicts will always occur so that they can equip themselves to deal with conflicts constructively (Hakvoort, 2010). "It is not very likely that unresolved conflicts will disappear; it is more likely that they are given space to escalate, transform and resurface repeatedly" (Hakvoort, 2010, p. 165).

This concept of conflict is not widely understood. "There is no doubt that the general public does not understand the phenomenon of conflict or how to handle it constructively…the average person has little capacity for and no training in conflict resolution at any level" (Reardon, 1988, p. 17). When handled productively conflict can actually be a positive, natural and fundamental part of daily life. "Conflict is inevitable during children's classroom and playground interactions. Conflict, when constructively managed, can stimulate development, adaptation and change" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000, p. 2). The conflict transformation framework aligns with this viewpoint as well. "A transformational perspective is built upon two foundations: a capacity to envision conflict positively, as a natural phenomenon that creates potential for constructive growth, and a willingness to respond in ways that maximize this potential for positive change" (Lederach, 2003, p. 15). Not only can conflict contribute to healthy development, conflict is essential to it (Stevahn, et al. 2000). "Conflict is posited as an essential impetus to change, adaptation, and development by almost every major theory that addresses fundamental issues in social and cognitive development" (Stevahn et al., 2000, p. 772). According to Shantz (1987), conflicts are opportunities to choose between adapting or not, and growing or regressing. When people find themselves in the midst of a conflict they can use that event as an opportunity for transformation.

Conflicts are important to the growth and development of relationships as well as individuals. “Conflict can be a necessary and creative dynamic in most relationships, transforming, both individuals and the relationship, if approached in a healthy way” (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 147). Conflict experienced by children within their context of friendship is important. Disputes between children afforded them with the opportunity to reach agreements about the conditions of their relationships. The children developed better insights into what they could expect from each other. The children were also able to discern their own actions and role as a friend (Rizzo, 1992). Conflict serves a purpose in relationships. Hierarchies are established and those involved in the conflict learn to adapt to the environment and cooperate with one another (Stevahn et al., 2000). Conflict also serves the purpose of illuminating systems that might not be as effective as previously assumed. “It is at the moment when the child’s behavior runs counter to the group’s goals and expectations that the system is explicitly revealed” (Shantz, 1987, p. 301). A student who causes conflict in a school or classroom is creating an opportunity to reassess current system efficacy.

> Conflict has many positive functions. It prevents stagnation, it stimulates interest and curiosity, it is the medium through which problems can be aired and solutions arrived at, it is the root of personal and social change. Conflict is often part of the process of testing and assessing oneself … In addition, conflict demarcates groups from one another and thus helps establish group and personal identities; external conflict often fosters internal cohesiveness. (Deutsch, 1977, p. 8-9)

Despite the perception that conflict is a negative force, research shows that there are many benefits to conflicts when solutions are sought and attained in helpful ways. Conflict is essential to development of children. “Development cannot be achieved without conflict, so it is

a must to teach positive ways to cope with conflict in our schools" (Kasik & Kumcagiz, 2014, p. 180).

Two important terms related to conflict are cooperation and competition. "One way of discussing conflict is to think of it in terms of a continuum going from cooperation to competition and finally to conflict" (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 147). Cooperation is the key process when a person is working toward her own goals and also trying to help others attain their goals simultaneously. Competition, in contrast, is when one person works only toward her goals and in the process minimizes the opportunity for others to real their goals (Deutsch, 1977). "The interest here is in conflict where there is a mixture of cooperative and competitive interests, where a variety of outcomes is possible: mutual loss, gain for one and loss for the other, and mutual gain" (Deutsch, 1977, p. 18). The variety of outcomes is crucial to the hope for constructive resolution.

Conflict, Aggression, and Violence

"Conflict situations can be particularly demanding because they require using multiple social skills simultaneously when the adolescent is personally invested in a social interaction" (Borbely, Graber, Nichols, Brooks-Gunn, & Botvin, 2005, p. 279-280). Though sometimes used synonymously, conflict, aggression, and violence do not refer to the same processes or events, "Aggressive behavior is only one of many types of behaviors that may occur in conflict, or in fact may be entirely absent" (Shantz, 1987, p. 285). Shantz (1987) defines aggression as behavior that is designed to harm or injure others. She defines conflict, however, in line with what has already been stated here, incompatibility that becomes clear when one person explicitly opposes another's deeds or statements. Aggression is not present in most conflicts (Shantz, 1987).

Aggression is different from conflict. It is a strategy for resolving conflicts, if not a constructive strategy (Borbely et al., 2005).

Reactive and proactive aggression models provide general descriptions of two ways people behave. According to Crick and Dodge (1996) reactive aggression is defined as a defensive response to aggravation. They define proactive aggression as deliberate behavior positively reinforced by the external environment. Aggressive children act out of each of these models differently. Reactive aggressive children perceive their peers as intentionally mean and threatening, whether the intention truly exists or not. They do not give their peers the benefit of the doubt (Crick & Dodge, 1996). Proactive aggressive children perceive aggression as an effective way to attain their goals. This perception is reinforced when peers submit to proactive aggressive children (Crick & Dodge, 1996). Aggressive children expect positive outcomes from their aggression and consequently feel more confident about enacting that aggression (Crick & Dodge, 1996).

Three forms of proactive aggression are relational aggression, social aggression, and covert aggression. Relational aggression occurs when people harm others through the threat of rejection (Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006). It has long-term, future consequences for children.

> …relational aggression was significantly associated with current and future rejection, and this increased over the school year. The subsequent lack of opportunities to experience belonging and acceptance in close relationships has been shown to be associated with feeling of loneliness, low subjective well-being and non-adjustment. (Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006, p. 24)

Relational aggression is most often associated with girls. It allows them to give expression to their anger while still appearing to be nice (Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006). Social

aggression includes behaviors such as negative facial expressions or body language, defamation, and social marginalization that indirectly degrades another person causing damage to self-esteem or social status (Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006). When a person is able to mete out aggression while appearing to be someone who is incapable of mistreating another in the first place it's called covert aggression (Browne & Carroll-Lind, 2006).

Aggression becomes violence when it turns to physical harm and injury. Violence is detrimental to children on many levels. "Studies have linked witnessing or being the victim of community violence with diminished academic performance and greater behavioral and emotional problems among students" (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013, p. 379-380). School and community environments marked by violence hurt both children and teachers (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013).

Each of these types or models of aggression can be used to stop a conflict involving differing social and relational goals among children. However, aggression is not an approach to ending conflict that leads to positive development. "Self-regulation is the ability to act in socially approved ways in the absence of external monitoring by others. It is a central and significant hallmark of cognitive, social and moral development" (Johnson, D., & Johnson, R., 1995, p 435). It is important for children to learn to self-regulate because adults cannot always be present and aggression and violence are unhealthy ways to solve conflicts.

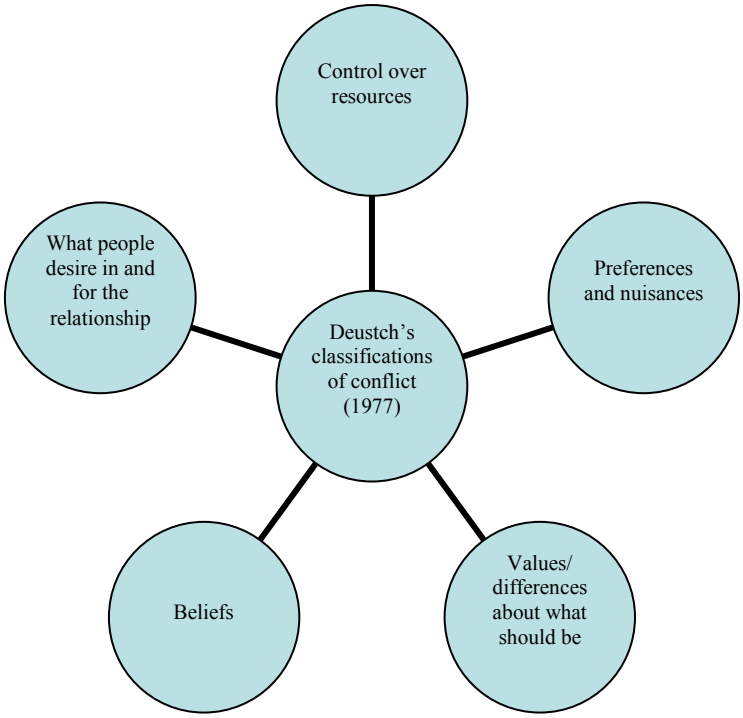
Types of Conflict

Conflict can be destructive or constructive depending on how it is managed. Destructive conflicts are defined as those that swell beyond the principle issue to other related issues. These conflicts then escalate through the use of threats and forcing strategies and end in the discontent of both parties (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000; Shantz, 1987). Constructive conflicts, on the

contrary, remain focused on the main issue as the parties engage in problem-solving and end in reciprocally sufficient outcomes (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000; Shantz, 1987). These definitions corroborate the neutrality of the conflict itself, determining its value by how the resolution is conducted.

The literature supports two main classifications of conflict. One of these was from Morton Deutsch, (1977) who identified five categories of conflict.

Figure 2.1 Deutsch's Classifications of Conflict

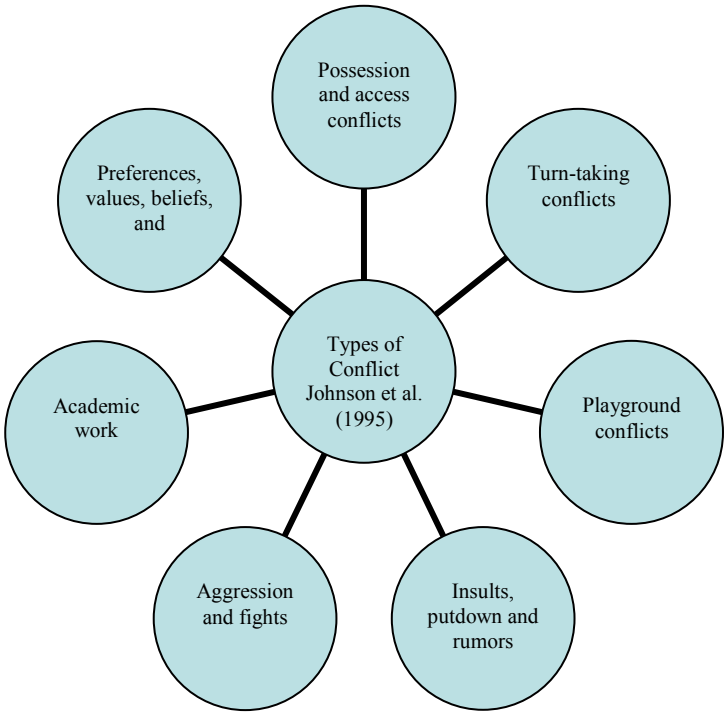


The first classification was control over resources. A conflict qualifies for this category when the items may be viewed as non-sharable, the conflict is difficult to resolve constructively because there is a rigid fixation on the resource, and little possibilities for substitutes. Deutsch's (1977), second category was preferences and nuisances. These conflicts occur when one person's activities or tastes impinge on another's activities or tastes. A third category in Deutsch's (1977),

classification system was values or difference about what should be. This includes a claim that one value should dominate over another. A person's beliefs were the fourth category. This category included a person's basic assumptions and difference in perceptions. Deutsch's (1977), final category was the nature of relationship between parties, meaning differences in how people view the relationship and what people desire in and for the relationship.

A second classification system for conflict was described by Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, and Magnuson (1995). They used seven categories to differentiate conflicts among and between children. These categories were (a) aggression and fights (b) insults, putdown and rumors (c) playground conflicts (d) turn-taking conflicts (e) possession and access conflicts (f) preferences, values, beliefs, and (g) over academic work.

Figure 2.2 Seven Categories for Differentiating Conflict



Identifying the type of conflicts in which children are engaging can help to understand student goals, which are central to determining constructive outcomes.

The Nature of Peace

Peace can be classified as positive or negative. Positive peace is concerned with the environment and resources, universal human rights, and social justice. It is concerned with a world in which the necessity for violence has been significantly lessened; if not abolished (Reardon, 1988). This peace is achieved through cooperation and integration (Harber & Sakade, 2009). Negative peace is defined simply as the absence of violence. (Reardon, 1988; Harber & Sakade, 2009). Negative peace can be achieved without positive peace, but the opposite is not true. Additionally, negative peace is not sustainable without positive peace "It is becoming increasingly evident and urgent that the principles of respect and care that characterize positive peace must be applied to all our dealings and every aspect of life on our planet" (Francis, 2011, p. 508).

Hakvoort (2010), described Richard Cohen's pyramid of conflict, as another way to organize concepts of peace. The pyramid is presented as a triangle divided into four layers. The bottom three layers are described as consensual peace. Consensual, in this case, means that relationships are based on interconnections where everyone involved in a conflict can win (Hakvoort, 2010). The fourth layer, at the very top of the triangle, is described as imposed peace, or a powerful third party ends violent behavior by separating the disputants, although the conflict itself is left unresolved. The relationship between the two parties is referred to as negative interdependency, with one party enforcing peace. One party becomes the winner and the other party becomes the loser (Hakvoort, 2010).

Figure 2.3 Cohen's Conflict Pyramid (Hakvoort, 2010)

In the section described as consensual peace, the bottom, and the largest layer is called prevention. Hakvoort (2010), asserts that this is the equivalent of peacebuilding. Here, conflicts do not occur because the school environment is supportive and when conflicts do occur they can be handled easier because of healthy relationships between participants. The next layer is referred to as conflict handling and is the equivalent of peacemaking. Here negotiation is used to resolve conflicts. The third layer in the triangle is called help and is also referred to as peacemaking. This is where conflicts are mediated. The final layer, at the top of the triangle, classified as imposed peace, is called stop. This is referred to as peacekeeping and it is at this point that conflicts must be arbitrated by a third party (Hakvoort, 2010). In the first three layers of Cohen's pyramid, positive peace is the goal. Relationships are being built, developed and maintained. At the final layer, however, the primary goal has turned toward negative peace, stopping the conflict. Moreover, the control of the solution has been taken from the conflict participants.

Peace Education

Purpose

The purpose of education is to help children reach their full potential and to learn how to contribute to their communities. “Peace education enhances the purpose of education, which is to reveal and tap into those energies that make possible the full human enjoyment of a meaningful and productive existence” (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 3). The purpose of educating for peace is to create peaceful relationships. The purpose of educating about peace is to become mindful of peace and conflict and offer the processes of peaceful resolution in schools and in the world (Harber & Sakade, 2009). Educating for and about peace is important in order to build a society free of violence.

Violence is virtually never a means of resolving a conflict; at best it may terminate one phase of a conflict that will subsequently erupt again (Reardon, 1988). Violent conflict occurs because other modes of resolving conflict are not used. Most people, even at the highest levels of political leadership, are as uninformed regarding alternatives methods of conflict resolution as they are of comprehensive and foundational causes of conflict (Reardon, 1988). “This ignorance is itself a major cause of war” (Reardon, 1988, p. 17). By educating children about positive peace and constructive ways of resolving conflicts, violence can be prevented on all levels, within the self, between individuals, between groups, and between nations. “Peace education can serve to support and protect children in the process of peacebuilding by teaching skills and concepts which children can draw upon when faced with new conflict or when dealing with the aftermath of past conflict” (Fulcher, 2012, p. 41).

Peace education encompasses many concepts. “Rather than being peripheral to educational efforts, peace is central” (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 5). Teaching for justice is an

important part of Peace Education. “Peace education involves students and educators in a commitment to create a more just and peaceful world order. This begins with the individual’s quest for inner peace and …continues with the possibilities of system transformation toward a just society” (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 4). Other concepts included in peace education are communication skills, co-operation and problem-solving, and emotional literacy (Harber & Sakade, 2009).

Emotional Literacy

Emotional literacy is defined as a person’s ability to read and communicate her emotions, as well as the emotions of others. “We define emotional knowledge as a child’s fund of information about emotion and emotional experience in the self and others that is used to understand and interpret events in the environment” (Brenner & Salovey, 1997, p. 176). Two primary skills that are linked to the development of skilled emotion regulation are understanding when the expression of emotion is appropriate and the appropriate way to express it. When children do not learn to express themselves in suitable ways they can alienate themselves from others, making it difficult to adapt to their social environment (Shipman et al., 2003). “Competent emotion regulation requires that children express emotion in a way that will best facilitate their adaptation within a given social context” (Shipman et al., 2003, p. 103).

Teaching children to identify emotions and label them is an important aspect of learning to regulate emotion. “Children’s ability to regulate emotion is probably influenced to some degree by their fund of emotional knowledge, which implies that teaching children about how to recognize and label emotions in others could help them regulate adaptively” (Brenner & Salovey, 1997, p. 182). When children are able to label their own emotions, as well as the emotions of others; they are more likely to be cooperative, helpful, and generous with other children. This

suggests that emotional knowledge guides social interaction (Brenner & Salovey, 1997). Children who can surmise thoughts and feelings of others accurately are less likely to involve themselves in destructive conflict (Lane-Garon, 2000). Children who develop flexible and adaptive ways to regulate emotion achieve higher academically, have a better quality of relationships with peers and are closer to their parents (Borbely et al., 2005).

Teaching Peace

Peaceful environments are important to student academic achievement. "All empirical and anecdotal evidence tells us that the pursuit of academic achievement requires learning environments that foster civility, safety, and connectedness" (Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003, p. 47). There are many aspects to creating this environment and educating for and about peace play an important role.

Peace education can take many forms. Teaching for and about peace involves discussing and reflecting on conflict in different contexts: between children, within the context of local government and through intergenerational community projects (Fulcher, 2012). Emotional literacy plays an important role in teaching children to develop peaceful relationships. "Peace educators' interested in violence prevention teach their students to understand that anger is a normal emotion that can be handled positively" (Harris, 2013, p. 77). Managing anger is important, but so are communication skills, self- esteem, self-control and empathy which, when intentionally developed, contribute to a sense of responsibility, ability to problem solve, and an increase in respect for others (Kasik & Kumcagiz, 2014). Another important skill in peace education is perspective taking, seeing a conflict from the other's point of view (Lane-Garon, 2000). "Nonviolence in education does not just mean a quiet classroom. It suggests a learning

environment in which students are acting on problems constructively, managing their conflicts creatively, and taking on challenging tasks" (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 162).

Peace education takes communities beyond tolerance. Tolerance alone is not adequate. "A peace education student can learn to affirm the importance of different groups but still use critical thinking skills to criticize those beliefs and practices that are meant to reinforce boundaries and exclude people from full participation in a democratic society" (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 149). Changing ideas and attitudes, building new knowledge can lead to new ways of living and working together (Harris & Morrison, 2013).

Responses to Conflict

There are many non-violent responses to conflict. Among them are conflict resolution, peer mediation, arbitration and conflict transformation. A brief description of each approach ensues here. Non-violent conflict intervention is an umbrella term under which the remaining terms fall. Conflict resolution's main goal is to end conflict. Peer mediation is a process through which peers guide each other through resolving conflicts. Arbitration is a process by which a third party ends the conflict and decides on the solution. Conflict transformation is an evolutionary step beyond these three approaches. Non-violent conflict intervention, in general, will be discussed first, followed by an examination of each of these responses.

Non-violent conflict intervention

The possibility that conflict may no longer be repressed and avoided, but rather identified openly, valued, and addressed is one benefit of viewing conflicts positively (Stevahn, et al., 2002, p. 325). Early learning in addressing conflicts constructively is important. According to Stevahn et al. (2000), children learn violent behaviors as early as kindergarten and without intervention, the violence tends to continue and intensify. By the time children are eight years

old, these destructive habits are almost impossible to break. Without direct training, children might never learn to manage conflicts constructively (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, & Magnuson, 1995).

Managing conflict constructively has important positive outcomes. "Adolescents use conflict to clarify personal growth, generate interpersonal insights and create heroic drama" (Stevahn et al., 2002, p. 306). Other outcomes include improved self-esteem, communication skills development, thoughtful decision-making and critical thinking. "Constructive conflict management can also promote positive relationships amongst students" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000, p. 4). Teaching students about conflict and how to resolve conflicts non-violently creates positive learning environments for children.

Classifying conflict responses. Shantz (1987) outlines three levels of conflict as listed in figure 2.4. The first level, level 0, describes conflicts that end when the interaction between children stops. Students are not walking away to cool off, rather as the children leave the situation they forget that the conflict occurred. Level 1 describes conflicts that end when one child ceases in order to make the other child feel better. The resolution is not mutual. The final level is usually where children ages 8 to 14 operate. This level is defined by the belief that both children must agree with the outcome for the conflict to be actually solved. What may be missing in this level is the understanding that a resolution should also be mutually satisfying.

Table 2.1

Three Levels of Conflict

Level	Description
Level 0	Interaction between children stops. Conflict is forgotten.
Level 1	One child submits to the other.
Level 2	The children reach a mutually satisfying conclusion

There are six steps to choosing a behavioral response to a conflict situation (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003). These are outlined in figure 2.5. The steps are encoding, interpreting, selecting, accessing, choosing and enacting. "Children who perform competency at each of these steps are said to be socially skilled" (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003, p. 153-154). Children move through these steps to determine what their behavior response should be. Typically, children attempt to resolve conflicts through assimilation and accommodation. These approaches lead to a reduction of egocentrism, an important developmental process (Stevahn et al., 2000).

Table 2.2

Steps to Choosing a Behavior Response

Step	Response
Step 1	encoding
Step 2	interpreting
Step 3	selecting
Step 4	accessing
Step 5	choosing
Step 6	enacting

Another way to classify children's response to conflict is by dividing them into two categories of conflict management strategies, goal orientation and relationship orientation (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, Ward, & Magnuson, 1995). The following five strategies (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotten, Harris, & Louison, 1995) exist along a continuum based on whether relationships or goals are more highly valued. These strategies, presented in figure 2.6, are forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and integrative negotiation. Forcing ensures that a person achieves her goal without concern for the relationship. Withdrawing causes a person to give up both the goal and the relationship. Smoothing maintains the relationship but sacrifices the goal. Compromising requires a person to give up part of his objective at some loss to the relationship. Finally, integrative negotiation preserves both the relationship and the

participants' goals as the process involves reaching an agreement that meets the needs of both participants. The identification of five strategies is an alternative to the more commonly perceived choices available to those ensnared in conflict, seek help from an authority or react with physical aggression (Aceves et al., 2010).

Figure 2.4 Continuum of Relationship Oriented vs. Goal Oriented Strategies

Children are able to differentiate which strategy works best in which context.

> …while certain skills may be universally important, others are situation-dependent. The value of strong communication skills cuts across context in determining competent outcomes with age-mates and authority figures…skills that underlie conflict resolution competence vary depending on the nature of the relationship. (Borbely et al., 2005, p. 289)

Because children have this ability to differentiate which strategies will work for which relationships, perhaps the crucial component of social competence is choosing the strategy, not the use of the strategy (Joshi, 2008).

There are three parts to a broad approach to education for resolution conflict (Johnson, D., & Johnson, R., 1995). The first is to establish a cooperative environment. The second is to use academic controversies to increase academic achievement, motivation to learn and to manage scholarly conflicts. This approach involves structuring learning situations in which students can share her ideas, theories, opinions, and conclusions especially when they are

incompatible with another's so that the two can work constructively to reach a solution (Johnson, D., & Johnson, R., 1995). And the third is to establish a peace education program that teaches students integrative negotiation and mediation. Teaching constructive procedures for resolving conflicts helps mitigate against the development of unhealthy conflict resolution habits. Leaving children to their own devices in this way not only hurts them but their communities as well (Stevahn et al., 2000).

Politeness theory. When people take care of other's social identities, as well as their own, during social interactions this is called Politeness theory (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). Transgressions usually injure the social identities of victims as well as harm doers. "If no remedial action is taken, victims must submit to the lower status" (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994, p. 6). Apologies from those causing harm may be sufficient to restore the injured social identity of victims, as well as their own. Consistent with this assumption, Ohbuchi et al. (1989), found that victims usually desire apologies from those that hurt them.

When harm is caused, the perpetrator can approach reconciliation in four ways according to Ohbuchi and Sato (1994). These approaches are refusals, justifications, excuses, and concessions or apologies. Apologies or concessions are defined as moderating strategies because they can reduce conflict. There is some experimental evidence that shows that apologies effectively reduce undesirable penalties (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994).

Although, excuses have also been discovered to be a successful approach to reconciling the conflict, they differ from apologies in important ways. In apologies, those causing harm first admit personal responsibility for the harm caused and then ask for forgiveness. Excuses are efforts to assign responsibility for harm to external sources (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). Excuses essentially place the blame for harm on outside forces. They are only as successful as apologies

when the victim believes the harm to be unintentional (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). When offenders apologized, children began to think better of them. They saw the offender as remorseful and did not pursue punishment (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994).

However, apologies are not always accepted. The more severe the transgression, the more comprehensive the apology needs to be in order to lessen the victim's anger. "The perceived causes of harm may determine the effects of excuses, whereas the severity of harm is important in the case of apologies" (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994, p. 15). Successful apologies help to restore the victim's and the perpetrators social identities (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). "Researchers have generally considered conventional strategies – mostly in the form of apologizing and making up – and submission constructive behaviors in conflict resolution" (Joshi, 2008, p. 144).

Resolving conflict requires a great deal from children"…conflict situations can be particularly exacting as they require using problem-solving skills, communication skills, assertiveness skills, and emotional regulation skills concurrently" (Borbely et al., 2005, p. 282). Peer rejection or acceptance can hinge on a child's ability to manage conflicts (Joshi, 2008). While some researchers have concluded that the alarm regarding violence in schools is not fully justified, concern regarding how constructively students manage their interpersonal conflicts is justified (Lindsay, 1998). "There is a certain need to find permanent and long-term solutions to conflicts in the classroom" (Basar & Akan, 2013, p. 27).

Conflict Resolution

According to Harris and Morrison (2013), there are three approaches to conflict resolution, avoidance, diffusion, and confrontation. The aim of each is the same, to create safe schools. "Conflict resolution education provides students with peacemaking skills which they can use to manage their interpersonal conflicts. The emphasis in this type of peace education is

upon creating a safe school" (Harris & Morrison, 2013, p. 78). Research studies show that conflict resolution education in the United States has a beneficial impact on the school environment (Harris & Morrison, 2013).

An aspect of this beneficial impact is students taking responsibility and initiative in solving their own conflicts (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). "When teachers are committed to working with students…encouraging cooperative activities and administrators are committed to developing a discipline system for the whole school that gives responsibility to students, teaching of conflict resolution skills is likely to be more effective" (Lindsay, 1998, p. 87). Cooperation among all parties is an important ingredient in making conflict resolution training more effective (Lindsay, 1998).

Important areas for inclusion in conflict resolution training includes communication, negotiation, dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving (Hakvoort, 2010). Conflict resolution training is an aspect of moral education, which changes individuals, empowers them to recognize and respect their own needs and the needs of others (Lindsay, 1998). "Emotions and cognitions experienced in real-life situations involving moral conflicts are an important source for children's moral learning" (Malti, Gasser, & Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger, 2010, p. 12). Though conflict resolution training is critically important for the development of future citizens (Gibbons, 2010), a major obstacle for conflict resolution programs is that they are founded on a set of assumptions that are very unlike foundational assumptions of schools. "To put it simply, these programs emphasize cooperation, whereas the culture of schools emphasizes competition" (Lindsay, 1998, p. 87).

Negotiation

Negotiation is defined as collaborative problem-solving, where the parties involved consider creative solutions in order to reach a solution (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). There are two approaches, distributive and integrative (Stevahn et al., 2002). Distributive negotiation is more indicative of the school culture to which Lindsay (1998) referred. It is directed toward extending personal benefit at the detriment to the other. Distributive negotiation is a contest between participants in which both attempt to win concessions over the other, forcing one to yield to another (Stevahn et al., 2002). This is typically referred to as a win-lose solution.

Integrative negotiation, in contrast, is intended to maximize mutual benefit as participants work to understand the other's interest. This requires creative problem solving so that each person can get what they want (Stevahn et al., 2002). This is typically referred to as a win-win solution. Integrative negotiation occurs in cooperative contexts where relationships are healthy and enduring. This type of negotiation leads to the most constructive solutions (Stevahn et al., 2002). However, studies indicate that students, independent of intentional training, do not instinctively apply integrative negotiation strategies when involved in conflicts (Stevahn et al., 2002).

According to Stevahn et al. (2002), there are six steps to integrative negotiation. These are (a) describing what one desires, (b) describing one's emotions, (c) describing the basic causes for one's wishes and emotions, (d) taking the other's perspective, (e) devising at least three possible agreements that capitalize on shared outcomes, and (f) arriving at one integrative agreement and shaking hands. Using these steps to reach integrative solutions is important because the resolution is more likely to be long-lasting.

> The research indicates that in a cooperative context there are mutual goals that all participants are committed to achieving. Cooperators tend to seek outcomes that are beneficial to everyone involved. They typically have a long-term time orientation and focus their energies both on achieving goals and on maintaining good working relationships with others. Communication tends to be frequent, complete, and accurate with each person interested in informing the other as well as being informed. Cooperators tend to recognize the legitimacy of each other's interests and search for a solution accommodating the needs of both sides. Conflicts tend to be defined as mutual problems to be solved in ways that benefit everyone involved. (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995, p. 420)

The research indicates that for competitors the opposite is true. They see the situation only from their perspective and focus primarily on winning which leads to short-term solutions (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995).

Peer meditation

Peer mediation is a form of non-violent conflict intervention in which children use conflict resolution strategies to help each other solve their problems. Peer mediation often uses role play as a pedagogical approach during which students can rehearse the strategies being learned. This is important so that students can engage conflicts where they naturally occur, on the playground and between peers (Lane-Garon, 2000). According to Kasik and Kumcagiz (2014), peer mediation training provides students with the strategies to understand that conflict is a part of daily life, develop important skills for problem-solving, and understand individual differences. When children master empathy, successful communication skills, flexibility, and problem solving skills learned through peer mediation, they are less susceptible to violence and

peer pressure, and better at self-regulation and managing disagreement (Lane-Garon, 2000). Being a mediator means that a child can guide others through these processes as well (Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003).

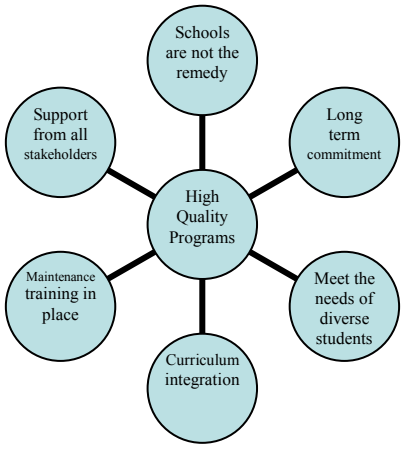
A problem with peer mediation is that sometimes the programs are based on training only a small group of students, or a cadre, to be mediators. This is less successful than whole school training. A small group of mediators is not enough to produce meaningful results (Lane-Garon, 2000). “There is emerging evidence that size of the mediator cadres in proportion to the untrained population is critical” (Lane-Garon, 2000, p. 469). The participants and the mediators realize different outcomes based on their particular roles. Participants learn to identify their emotions while mediators learn more about conflict analysis and creating alternative solutions (Ibarrola-García & Redín, 2013).

The process of peer mediation is very similar to other conflict resolution processes. Stevahn et al. (2002), outlines a four-step procedure. The first step is stopping the hostilities between participants. The second step is to confirm that participants are committed to the mediation process. The third step is to employ the integrative negotiation process with the participants and finally they sign a written contract outlining the agreement.

According to Lindsay (1998), there are six components of high-quality programs. These are outlined in figure 2.7. The first is an understanding that schools alone cannot remedy the situation. Schools with high-quality programs also make a long-term commitment to the program. Programs are designed to meet the needs of both vulnerable and average students. Another important component is curriculum integration. High-quality training and workshops designed to support the skills learned are in place. A final component of high-quality peer

mediation program is support from all stakeholders, community, faculty, staff, and administration.

Figure 2.5 Components of High-Quality Peer Mediation Programs



Peer mediation programs have several potential benefits (Cunningham, et al., 1998). Recess is a low surveillance context and so the risk for conflict is high. With peers watching for conflicts that need to be addressed, more subtle conflicts can be detected quickly and intervention can occur before the conflict escalates. Finally, peer mediation is a relatively low-cost solution (Cunningham et al., 1998).

However, school personnel have identified some problems with peer mediation programs (Lindsay, 1998). Vulnerable students have intense and specialized needs that are different from the average students. Peer mediation programs sometimes have difficulty meeting such a diverse array of needs. A second problem is the influence of families and society. Schools alone cannot solve the problems of violence, etc. Another problem is sometimes a lack of strong leadership and the struggle to keep the whole school community informed about the program. Teachers have a need for more training for themselves as well. Sometimes teachers were skeptical about

the benefits and resist the program. A final problem is time. Peer mediation programs require time from teachers and student time away from the classrooms. Teacher arbitration is a much quicker process (Lindsay, 1998).

Arbitration

It has been common practice for students to report conflicts to the teacher and for teachers to solve the problem when students become entangled in a conflict (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). Teachers consider helping students to resolve conflict to be part of their role (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). "Even though the teachers often reported feeling 'annoyed'…by taking on the role of 'arbitrator', observations revealed that teachers frequently initiated intervention in student disputes" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000 p. 16). Both teachers and students are more comfortable with the role of teacher as arbitrator of conflicts (Aceves et al., 2010). Teacher arbitration stops the victimization immediately and helps feelings of isolation, rejection, and hopelessness dissipate. It creates the impression that teachers know how to address conflict and that the conflict is less likely to repeat. And in truly violent situations it is the best choice to ensure safety (Aceves et al., 2010).

However, teacher arbitration can come at some cost to student growth and learning. "Parties do not tend to see their mistakes and display empathy to each other under the arbitration of the teacher" (Basar & Akan, 2013, p. 29). When teachers are the main arbitrators of conflict there is cost to instructional time as well. "Research shows that teachers spend a lot of time on undesired behaviors in the classroom and, therefore, cannot spend enough time on the learning processes. It is seen that teachers mostly prefer traditional methods in solving this problem" (Basar & Akan, 2013, p. 26). As teachers are overloaded, they pass the arbitration responsibilities up the chain of command to the administration. This leads to less constructive

forms of conflict resolution (Basar & Akan, 2013). In the end, except in cases of physical violence, teacher arbitration increases student dependence on outside authorities instead of empowering students to create healthy relationships.

Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation is not an entirely different theory than conflict resolution or peer mediation. Instead, it builds upon the best precepts of these. Drawing on familiar concepts of conflict resolution and conflict management, it is best perceived as a reconceptualization of the field in order to make it more appropriate to present conflicts (Miall, 2004). The goal of conflict transformation is not just to eliminate conflict, as in negative peace, or even in some forms of conflict resolution, but rather to use conflict for its potential innovation and transformation (Harris & Morrison, 2013).

Transformation signifies deliberately intervening to lessen poor communication and to increase mutual understanding (Lederach, 2003). It strives to gain understanding about the primary causes and social environments which create and nurture violent conflicts; to help those in conflict understand the cultural patterns that influence conflict in their context, and then to identify, promote, and develop the resources and methods within that culture for constructively addressing conflict (Lederach, 2003). “This includes trying to bring to the surface explicitly the relational fears, hopes, and goals of the people involved” (Lederach, 2003, p. 25). Additionally, conflict transformation directly encourages nonviolent means to reduce combative interactions and strives to lessen – and finally eradicate – violence (Lederach, 2003).

Relationships are broader than just between people. They define the whole interaction within society and between societies. Conflicts are triggers in poor relationships and can become a serious obstacle to peace efforts, even after the violence has ended. Memories are the fabric of

a community's experience and provide shape and context for any discourse regarding peace (Miall, 2004). "Context, relationships, and memories are all part of the tissue connecting the contradictions, attitudes, and behaviors in the conflict formations, within the wider background in space and time" (Miall, 2004, p. 8).

The common pattern in conflicts is for them to broaden, widen and intensify (Miall, 2004). "But it is also possible for conflict to be transformed, as parties shift positions and adopt new goals, new actors emerge and new situations develop allowing for new relationships and changed structures" (Miall, 2004, p. 7). A conflict transformation approach is one of hope that requires difficult action.

> …insisting on doing forbidden things, standing firm in the face of intimidation, refusing to obey orders. In this sense, it can be seen as the 'hard power' equivalent in the repertoire of conflict transformation at the interface with the dominating paradigm. At the same time it is, at its best, founded in respect for the other, a determination not to do harm and the constant will to enter into dialogue. Metaphorically speaking, it holds up an open hand palm out, to say 'stop' while at the same time proffering the other as a sign of the will for friendship. (Francis, 2011, p. 519)

There is little literature describing how conflict transformation can be applied to schools and classrooms. However, schools are contexts for conflict.

School Culture

Recess

Recess is an ideal time for conflicts between children to occur. "On the playground, children often interact with their peers outside the direct observation of the teacher, affording a place where peer culture can flourish" (Theobald & Danby, 2012, p. 222). Peer culture on the

playground includes conflict, bullying, and aggressive behavior (Cunningham et al., 1998). "Many children come to school not really knowing how to engage in healthy play" (Vialet, 2008, p. 38). Children who do not play together well often experience rejection from peers (Cunningham et al., 1998). Only a small portion of incidents involving aggression undergo teacher intervention and children are cautious about intervening or informing adults (Cunningham et al., 1998). "Whereas a small group of children are consistently victims of interpersonal aggression, a larger number of children are involved as perpetrators, passive participants or witnesses" (Cunningham et al., 1998, p. 653).

Some administrators are tempted to end the practice of recess due to the aggression and conflicts that occur (Vialet, 2008). However, when children are taught constructive problem-solving and conflict resolution the problems at recess are transformed. A smoothly running recess nurtures empathetic relationships and creates opportunities for important student involvement. In fact, recess offers a perfect opportunity to practice conflict resolution skills. These skills then carry over to the classroom (Vialet, 2008). Teamwork, respect, and encouragement, qualities that are foundational for safe and healthy play are also integral to safe and healthy schools (Vialet, 2008).

Teacher Perception

Teacher perception of conflict and conflict participants is important to the success of the resolution (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). "The literature suggests that the way in which conflicts are perceived by teachers can influence teachers' perceptions of students in conflict, and thus influence the effectiveness of conflict management" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000 p. 6).

According to Opotow (1991), teachers tend to perceive student conflicts as less important than the students do. They view students involved in conflict as developmentally deficient and

they view the occurrence of conflict as a sign of failure (Opotow, 1991; Shantz, 1989; Longaretti & Wilson, 2000).

"No teacher viewed conflict as positive and this was reflected in the negative ways conflict was dealt with" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000, p. 15). The most common teacher reactions to conflict are authoritarian approaches, forceful statements regarding school rules, separating participants, lecturing, and imposing solutions (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). Teachers expect students to be competent in some aspects of their school responsibilities but not in others (Theobald & Danby, 2012). Sometimes a teacher will perceive a conflict that is not there but because of her intervention it becomes one "Neither boy had raised pushing as an issue, but the teacher's intervention made it so" (Theobald & Danby, 2012, p. 235).

In order to maintain control, teachers prefer to maintain authority over conflicts. "Teachers handling conflict assumed an authoritarian persona" (Opotow, 1991, p. 426). They assumed commanding positions and intervened, and lectured and dictated resolutions to their students (Opotow, 1991). Stopping the conflict through teacher intervention was a preferred strategy and encouraging students to work out the problem through collaboration was the least preferred approach (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). Students also prefer the teacher to intervene in conflicts because it stops the damaging behavior in short-term. However, the destructive behavior and conflicts reoccur and are left unresolved (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). "The teacher's work often appears to be that of maintaining the orderliness of the children's world" (Davies, 1982, p. 68).

When teachers hold all the authority over how to manage conflicts and relationships, children are dis-empowered.

> When adults in children's lives act as referees and judges, adults place children in a dependent position and deprive them of opportunities to learn valuable self-regulation and social skills. The more students master and use integrative negotiation and mediation procedures, the more they independently regulate their own behavior and the less monitoring and control is required by adults. In addition, children and adolescents who are able to negotiate and mediate may have a developmental advantage over children who do not know how to do so. (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995, p. 435)

Teaching children to manage their own conflicts is teaching for the future, not just the immediate moment. These are skills the students can use again and again, instead of having to return to an authority figure at each conflict event.

The ideal role of the teacher is to teach students how to solve their own conflicts (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). This means modeling and teaching children interpersonal skills, effective communication and non-violent methods for solving conflicts (Cohen, 2005). "One of the things which strikes most first time observers at this school is the reflective speaking and listening and valuing of children's ideas and feelings which the teachers consistently bring to the classrooms" (Swadener, 1988, p. 31). This encourages an internal-locus of control (Swadener, 1988). "Teachers in schools with programs used the language of conflict resolution more often and were aware of having these additional techniques in their 'bag of tricks'" (Lindsay, 1998, p. 93).

Student Considerations

Children learn about peacemaking through their participation in creating peace. "Current methods of peacebuilding do not accept children as legitimate participants. This compounds the problem for children having been educated by conflict are denied the chance to be educated in

peacebuilding" (Fulcher, 2012, p. 40). When they are denied the opportunity to solve their own problems they are deprived of important learning opportunities (Hakvoort, 2010).

> Learning to cope with interpersonal conflict is an important aspect of children's social development. The constructive resolution of interpersonal conflict increases closeness and understanding, whereas failure to resolve such problems can cause serious problems in relationships. Thus, it is critical that children learn the social rules and skills related to handling conflicts. (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994, p. 5)

Conflict resolution training and opportunity to practice these skills without teacher intervention are crucial aspects of the development and maintenance of peer relationships. Children do not inherently have the skills needed to constructively resolve problems. "Students most commonly used conflict management strategies that involved contending: the use of force, threat, verbal, and physical tactics" (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000, p. 13). Students view conflict and aggression as the same event that leads to distressing outcomes (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000).

Developmental Considerations. Children's conceptions of conflict and how they are resolved, change over time. There are three fundamental aspects that change with development. The first is a change from a right now perspective to one that can consider future implications. The second is toward a relationship focused goal versus one focused on physical acts as defining a person. The third is from a self-centered position to one that considers another's perspective (Shantz, 1987). "Regulation of emotion is an important aspect of resolving conflict and as children develop cognitively their abilities in this area increase" (Brenner & Salovey, 1997). As most children typically develop they are able to engage in more complicated conflict resolution processes. "Developmentally, the most advanced strategy is offering a compromise"(Joshi, 2008, p. 134). Coordinating one's own goals with another's requires more advanced social strategies

(Joshi, 2008). If they do not develop these more complex approaches, they can experience difficulties with peer relationships "Children who used less advanced strategies for their age may face challenges in social adjustment" (Joshi, 2008, p. 134).

Younger Children. Very young children are capable of an important aspect of conflict resolution. "By three years of age, children actively co-construct their past experiences when conversing with adults, and by the end of preschool they can give fairly coherent accounts of their own (moral) experiences without adult guidance" (Malti et al., 2010, p. 12). The stories children tell are a significant part of understanding relationships. "Memories are part of each party's socially constructed understanding of the situation, shaped by culture and learning, and discourse and belief" (Miall, 2004, p .8). A group's construction of their past is fundamental to the organization of conflict (Miall, 2004).

Emotional regulation appears repeatedly in the literature as a distinguishing factor for developmental stages in conflict resolution skills. "In relation to child age, research indicates a developmental shift across the elementary-school year in which older children (gr 4-5), as compared to younger children (gr 1-2), demonstrate increased understanding regarding the appropriateness of emotional expression in given situations (Shipman et al., 2003, p.105). Younger children tend to believe that emotions change depending on the situation alone (Brown, Covell, & Abramovitch, 1991) but as they grow they come to understand how thinking can help monitor emotion. Younger children are often caught in the immediate situation and its causes while older children are able to recognize events that may have led to the current situation (Brown et al., 1991).

In order to resolve conflicts constructively, individuals must be able to consider others' perspectives. However, children under age 7 or 8 cannot compare themselves to others. This may

inhibit their ability to take the perspective of another, a necessary skill in solving interpersonal conflicts (Stevahn et al., 2000). Children younger than 10 believe that an individual only experiences one emotion at a time. These younger children also have trouble comprehending situations that are both constructive and destructive (Brown, Covell, & Abramovitch, 1991).

In solving conflicts children rely on apologies and excuses. However, depending on the age of the student, apologies may have a limited impact. For second grade students, apologies may not be as effective as other strategies because they have not yet reached a cognitive developmental stage that would help them understand the implications (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). While second-grade students (typically 7 and 8-year-olds) do not always accept apologies, they do appear to accept excuses. This is not true for older children (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994).

Older children. Children's social capabilities change considerably as they grow older. "Relative to preschoolers, elementary school-age children are more capable of understanding the multiple perspectives in a situation and thus are better able to respond to attempts to explain different ways of handling a situation" (Kliewer et al., 1996, p. 2339). Older children are more accurate when translating and understanding information in social situations (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003). They are better able to choose appropriate and effective responses to circumstances. "Older children in both groups (object dispute vs. entry attempt), as compared to younger ones, showed more skill in accurately detecting prosocial intentions, made fewer errors of presumed hostility, and suggested more competent reactions to the provocation" (Shantz, 1987, p. 297). Older children have higher expectations for peer behavior than do younger children. They are less likely to show difficult emotions (Shipman et al., 2003) and more likely to view aggression negatively (Crick & Dodge, 1996). "Older children (9 or 10) on the other hand are capable of coping with distress by thinking about other things and are often able to

assess the needs of situations and apply appropriate regulatory strategies without requiring adult intervention" (Brenner & Salovey, 1997, p. 182).

Among the changes in experience as children grow older is the category of conflict (Shantz, 1987). Conflicts become more focused on social, rather than physical environments as children get older (Shantz, 1987). Children have different social goals depending on their age. Older children value relationships and are more aware of the relational aspects of social interaction (Crick & Dodge, 1996).

> Older children focused on the goal of making a new friend and helping the newcomer learn the 'rules of the territory,' whereas younger children focused on hostile goals…Older children deferred to the new child's wishes to change channels; younger children wanted to exclude the newcomer by avoidance and hostile strategies. (Shantz, 1987. p. 296)

Younger children are more focused on the present, what is important at the moment, the object. In contrast, older students can see past the 'now' and focus on the relationship (Shantz, 1987).

In the midst of a conflict fifth-grade students perceived less intention and more remorse on the part of those causing harm (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). Higher cognitive ability enabled students to consider intentionality, causing students to assign less blame when apologies were given (Ohbuchi & Sato, 1994). More responses, in general, as well as more effective responses, were suggested by older boys than their younger peers (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003).

Friendship. By the time children reach middle childhood they have clear expectations for their friendships (MacEvoy & Asher, 2012). They expect their friends to be confidantes, to be good companions, to be dependable, and to support them emotionally (MacEvoy & Asher,

2012). Well-developed expectations for friends include becoming more open and vulnerable as children participate in the relationship (MacEvoy & Asher, 2012).

A violation of friendship is a serious cause of conflict. "The majority of younger children (ages 7 and 8) cited hitting, taking a toy, and name calling, whereas most of the oldest cited a violation of friendship principle, such as not helping a friend in need or breaking a promise" (Shantz, 1987, p. 296). When trying to resolve the conflict it is not enough to just act friendly to mend the relationship. "For older children, acting friendly does not repair the friendship. One has to acknowledge the violation prior to reparative actions" (Shantz, 1987. p. 296). And a child's success or failure at mending relationships can determine their acceptance into a peer group (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003).

Benefits. Empowerment is an important outcome of conflict resolution programs in schools (Lindsay, 1998). "First, students are empowered to regulate their own behavior…Adults who act as referees or judges put children in a dependent position, thereby depriving them of opportunities to learn valuable social skills" (Johnson et al., 1995, p. 685). Additionally, children who have negotiation and mediation skills are developmentally advantaged over children who do not have these skills. "Using one's own competencies to resolve one's conflicts with others in a constructive way may increase the child's (a) ego strength and ability to cope with stress and adversity, and (b) ability to build and maintain high-quality relationships with peers" (Johnson et al., 1995, p. 685). Conflict resolution programs promoted personal responsibility in students, encouraging them to solve their own problems (Lindsay, 1998). "The importance of children having a voice in classroom decisions and activities cannot be underestimated in addressing the larger social issues which children were learning about" (Swadener, 1988, p. 38). Providing

students this opportunity for voice, especially students who may have been disempowered in the past, allows students to assert power in a positive way (Fulcher, 2012).

Conflict Intervention in Schools

Current Practice

Remember that Cohen's triangle (Hakvoort, 2010), is designed to begin with prevention (the largest section) and move progressively through smaller layers, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. When this is compared to actual school practices, it becomes clear that instead of spending the majority of time with prevention and the least amount of time with arbitration, a much different model emerges. Instead, very little time was spent on the middle two layers, with more energy spent in the bottom and top. "This means that in reality the pyramid looks like a sandglass" (Hakvoort, 2010, p.165).

Students refer their conflicts to teachers for arbitration because they do not know how to negotiate resolutions to their conflicts (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995).

> The literature describing conflict management strategies selected by students reflect that many disputes are being ineffectively and destructively managed. Students are commonly selecting unproductive methods such as physical force, contention, verbal abuse, and retaliation to manage conflicts. The strategies students selected were reactive rather than thoughtfully selected. (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000, p. 8)

Teacher response to student conflict is to neglect or suppress it (Longaretti & Wilson, 2000). Because school is customarily driven by quantifiable results, typically based on testing, children have little freedom to cultivate their own voice in regards to peace (Fulcher, 2012). When students are trained in alternatives they tend toward force and withdrawal as primary strategies, culminating in win/lose outcomes (Stevahn et al., 2000).

Johnson, D. and Johnson, R. (1995), identified typical daily conflicts and typical responses. Children had conflicts over put-downs and teasing, playground issues, access, and possession, physical aggression, academic work, and turn taking. Characteristic responses included referring the matter to the teacher, using destructive strategies that escalate the conflict rather than resolve it. Students lacked the knowledge of how to negotiate. According to Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotten et al. (1995), some of the destructive strategies included physical force, verbal force, withdrawing, telling the teacher, commanding the other, and invoking norms. "The most common solutions arrived at were agreements to avoid each other (77%); apologizing and forgiving solutions made up 13% of the solutions. Mediation never results in one student winning or in disputants negotiating an agreement" (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotton et al., 1995, p. 384). In the process of choosing these strategies, students ignored the maintenance of their relationships (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotton et al., 1995). Joshi (2008), also found that compromise was rare.

The common practice for students in schools is to manage conflicts through bargaining and forcing which leads to no resolution, one participant winning or teacher arbitration. However, several researchers found that when trained the outcomes of conflict were transformed. "Once trained in negotiation and mediation procedures, the children tended to negotiate integrative and new solutions to these conflicts. Training students to negotiate and mediate changed the strategies students used to manage conflicts and resulting outcomes" (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, Ward, et al., 1995, p. 842).

Impact of Intervention

Non-violent conflict intervention programs, including conflict resolution and peer mediation training, have several positive outcomes (Cunningham et al., 1998). Playground

conflicts were reduced. Recess, as well as the general school environment, became more positive. There were fewer conflicts brought to class and more mediation strategies were used independently (Cunningham et al., 1998). Both teachers and students benefit from teaching these strategies (Gibbons, 2010). "Through the constructive management of conflicts, schools can become places where destructive conflicts are prevented and the quality of student life is enhanced" (Stevahn et al., 2002, p. 329). Benefits of the training go beyond improving relationships to improving academic achievement as well. Training in conflict resolution improves students' self-esteem which impacts school performance (Kasik & Kumcagiz, 2014). Democratic and peaceful classrooms are better environments for students to study and develop positive self-esteem. As students learn peaceful and empowering ways to resolve conflicts, they resort to aggressive and violent methods less often (Kasik & Kumcagiz, 2014). "It is safe to say that individuals may be prevented from showing aggressive or passive reactions to conflicts and may be supported in assertiveness as a result of teaching conflict resolution skills" (Kasik & Kumcagiz, 2014, p. 183).

Reducing school violence. Maring and Koblinksy (2013), report that when peer mediation programs were removed from a particular school there was almost unanimous support for reinstituting them. Students were able to engage disputes directly with tools they had been given to mediate conflicts (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013). Prior research has determined that those involved in peer mediation programs caused fewer disciplinary problems and were suspended for violent transgressions less often than those who were not part of the programs (Maring & Koblinsky, 2013). Other studies have proposed that elementary school peer mediation programs have taught students how to respond to conflict situations in constructive ways and have conceivably reduced school violence (Schellenberg, Parks-Savage, & Rehfuss, 2007). "Peer

mediation in elementary schools has been identified as a resource that promotes positive peer interactions and reduces school violence" (Schellenberg et al., 2007, p. 475).

According to Cunningham et al. (1998), non-violent conflict intervention training programs lead to immediate and persistent decreases in aggressive behavior. "On no occasion during the conduct of the mediation program did observations of aggressive behavior exceed baseline levels" (Cunningham et al., 1998, p. 656-657). The greatest gain reported in another study was in the domain of school safety (Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003). Lindsay (1998), also found a decrease in fighting, increased instructional time, and students staying out of the administrative punitive system.

Applying negotiation strategies. Stevahn et al. (2000), conducted a study in which they found that trained students employed the integrative negotiation procedure when faced with conflict. Of the children who received training, 26% indicated that they would use the negotiation procedure to help peers reach an agreement, "None of the untrained children indicated that they would use the negotiation procedure to mediate a solution…" (Stevahn et al., 2000, p. 782). Stevahn et al. (2000), concluded that students who did not receive the training may never learn negotiation procedures even if they were in a setting where the process was taught to and used by others. In subsequent research, it was concluded that students trained in integrative negotiation procedures would apply the same problem-solving process voluntarily in other contexts (Stevahn et al., 2002). Also in this study, the researchers found that 57% of trained students applied the peer mediation process to help participants come to a resolution, while none of the students not receiving the training did so (Stevahn et al., 2002). Untrained students tended to approach conflicts with a distributive mindset and so attempted to maximize their own personal gain even when they had received instruction regarding real-life failures of distributive

negotiation. Students that had received direct instruction in the integrative negotiation procedure however, spontaneously applied the process to conflict situations (Stevahn et al., 2002). Other researchers made similar findings and drew similar conclusions. “These findings provide important evidence that (a) training changes the conflict strategies students use, and that (b) when students have a choice, students will choose constructive conflict resolution strategies over destructive ones” (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, Ward et al., 1995, p. 840).

Conflict resolution, peer mediation, and integrative negotiation training impacts schools in many ways. Teachers report less acute and destructive conflicts, and a more positive climate (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, & Magnuson, 1995). Students appeared better able to take the perspective of another person. “The mediation program appeared to improve the dispositional tendency to consider another’s point of view. The fact that even disputants significantly improved their perspective taking scores supports the power of social learning with more capable peers” (Lane-Garon, 2000, p. 475). They also sought more integrative solutions to problems. “Trained students chose to negotiate in order to reach an integrative agreement that maximized joint outcomes while maintaining the quality of the relationship at a high level” (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, Ward et al., 1995, p. 839). Teachers also reported an improvement in their own methods and management. “They reported that their exposure to conflict resolution training had influenced and enriched their own teaching methods and classroom management” (Lindsay, 1998, p. 92). Finally, students tended to pay more attention to relational goals in solving their interpersonal problems “During and after training, children in the experimental condition were highly relationship oriented, choosing strategies (negotiating and smoothing) that emphasize focusing on the quality of the relationship” (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, Ward et al., 1995, p. 840).

Independent problem-solving. Another way non-violent conflict intervention training impacts schools is encouraging students to constructively solve their conflicts independent of teacher arbitration. One study (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995) found that students who had not been trained were twice as likely, compared to trained students, to seek help from the teacher for resolving their conflict. Trained students were more apt to use the negotiation procedures to come to a solution, while no untrained students did so. In another study (Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003) it took ten months for the majority of study participants to rely more on talking to their conflict partner versus seeing assistance from the teacher. These same participants previously preferred intervention from an authoritative adult (Lane-Garon, 2000).

One study reported that the impact of non-violent conflict intervention training programs was felt in four areas of school life (Lindsay, 1998). These programs impacted discipline school-wide, providing more alternatives and increasing flexibility in managing student behavior (Lindsay, 1998). They also impacted the curriculum, teaching specific skills that were useful in every part of the students' lives. Instruction and classroom management were impacted as the teachers received training. And the overall culture of the school was impacted as students were encouraged to take responsibility for their own behavior and relationships (Lindsay, 1998).

Johnson, D. and Johnson, R. (1995), drew five conclusions from their study. Conflict resolution training is retained and used by students and teachers. It is applied in other contexts besides school. An integrated curriculum including conflict resolution training increases achievement. Students trained in integrative negotiation will use it. Instructional time increases as fewer conflicts are brought to the teacher for arbitration. Finally, training for the whole school works best. As evidenced in both of these studies' conclusions, non-violent conflict intervention training has a both deep and broad impact on the entire school community.

Contradictory Outcomes

One study conducted contradicted the findings of the studies discussed above (Shuval et al., 2010). This study, which focused on measuring hostility, hopelessness, conflict self-efficacy, and the likelihood of violence, had mixed results. The researchers conducted a community-based training program consisting of five workshops based on didactic lessons and roleplaying and addressing communication skills, emotional literacy, conflict styles, and conflict analysis. Data were collected through surveys and questionnaires. "The study results indicate that the intervention had little positive impact" (Shuval et al., 2010, p. 763). They found that school factors such as higher academic performance, a lower student/teacher ratio, more student trust in authorities and higher parental presence, had more impact on students' violence-related behaviors.

Another study (Ttofi & Farrington, 2012) considered peer mediation programs with specific regard to bullying. "(Evaluations of peer support programs) have repeatedly found to be non-effective in reducing actual levels of school bullying and victimization and in some cases, were correlated with an increase in bullying and victimization" (p. 454). They actually found that sometimes when peers intervene the conflict escalated and continued the cycle of violence. "Programs that have firm disciplinary methods tend to have larger effect sizes" (p. 444).

Despite these contradictory reports, the literature overwhelmingly supports implementing non-violent conflict intervention training programs. "Implementing programs designed to enhance communication competency during the transition into adolescence may benefit youth by building skills useful for navigating challenges and potential pitfalls of new and varied social contexts that are experienced at this time" (Borbely et al., 2005, p. 290). Helping students create and maintain healthy peer relationships will benefit them academically and socially. The most

important literature regarding children resolving conflict may be the literature that concerns itself with constructing and preserving healthy and happy relationships (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotten et al., 1995, p. 387).

Pedagogy

Generally, most auxiliary non-violent conflict intervention programs that are not linked to academic achievement have not been broadly implemented or supported over time (Stevahn et al., 2000). Programs that consider child development and how the programs fit into the curriculum and life of the school are better than others (Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003). According to Stevahn et al. (2002), new courses do not have to be developed. Rather, integrating non-violent conflict intervention programs into the current academic coursework can produce important learning results. "Practicing negotiation in the context of the academic curriculum apparently makes the curriculum more meaningful and memorable, perhaps because it involves students in higher order reasoning about the subject matter" (Stevahn et al., 2000, p.782).

Social Studies has been a useful content area for such integration. "Integrating conflict resolution and peer mediation training into the social studies curriculum had a significant and positive effect on the present students' academic achievement" (Stevahn et al., 2002, p. 327). The reason for the straightforward integration may be that the conflict resolution, peer mediation, and integrative negotiation constructs offers a framework for students to more deeply process academic information such as historical events (Stevahn et al., 2002).

Integration not only strengthens the academic material, it also makes it possible to teach important skills in an already crowded curriculum. "The viability of integrating conflict resolution training into academic courses and the training's positive effects on academic

achievement both may be important to the implementation and institutionalization of such programs" (Stevahn et al., 2002, p. 328).

An educational approach to teaching conflict resolution is academic controversy (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995). This process teaches students several processes that are important in the practice of resolving conflict. Among these are preparing, presenting and defending a position; taking an opposite perspective; making decisions that combine the best information and thought from both sides; and engaging in critiquing ideas without disparaging people (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995). Results of academic controversy include improved academic achievement, increased critical thinking and higher level reasoning, and increased intrinsic motivation, to name a few (Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995).

Summary

Conflict is a powerful tool for change. Educating students to resolve their conflicts constructively and independently will enhance their peer relationships and academic achievement. There is a great deal of literature, based in quantitative methods, that suggests a strong link between training for non-violent conflict intervention, improved school climate, and student relationships. These programs include emotional literacy, communication skills, and integrative negotiation. There is a dearth of qualitative literature exploring student experience with such programs. "The inclusion of children's interpretation of conflicts and their own behaviors would also add a crucial piece to the picture and help researchers better understand peers as a context of social learning" (Joshi, 2008, p. 146). There is no literature exploring student experience with programs grounded in Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework, which would include involving students in looking for the roots of the conflict and helping them to imagine a different future, teaching them to appreciate conflict as an opportunity

for change rather than avoid it, and helping them to understand how their own identity and the identities of others factor into conflicts. This work will fill this particular gap in the literature on non-violent conflict intervention training with children.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

The exploratory purpose of this study is particularly well suited to a qualitative research approach (Butin, 2009). "An exploratory design is best suited to qualitative research methods that allow for in-depth analysis of complex and layered issues and flexible enough to account for highly open-ended research questions…" (Butin, 2009, p. 80). My research question, "What is the impact of non-violent conflict intervention processes on fifth-grade students and their teacher" is aimed at uncovering the dynamics of conflictual interactions and the processes used to resolve them in an elementary classroom. "Researchers are bound not by tight cause-and-effect relationships among factors, but rather by identifying the complex interactions of factors in any situation" (Creswell, 2012, p. 47). A qualitative approach is necessary to fully understand the complexities of conflict intervention processes and their impact on a fifth-grade classroom.

Creswell (2012) describes seven common characteristics of qualitative research design. The first of these is conducting the research in a setting that is natural to the participants. During this study, I gathered first-hand information in a natural setting when I visited the school where students lived and worked on a daily basis. Through informal conversations, classroom discussions, observations and formal conversations during focus groups, students described their experience in their words. An important aspect of exploration was to check students' words with their actions.

A second common characteristic of qualitative research is "researcher as a key instrument" (Creswell, 2012, p. 45). The curriculum unit was devised with the collaboration of the classroom teacher so it was unique to this study and to this classroom. Focus group and

interview questions emerged from the framework and from interactions between myself and students, myself and the teacher, and students and the teacher that occurred throughout the course of the study. I did not use data collection tools designed by other researchers.

Using multiple methods for data collection is a third common characteristic of qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, interviews, focus groups, observational field notes, and physical artifacts were collected over the course of this study. These were analyzed and compared with one another using a codification process (Corbin & Strauss, 2007) in order to determine themes and commonalities.

A fourth common characteristic of qualitative research is "complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic" (Creswell, 2012, p. 45). Themes emerged inductively as student and teacher responses were analyzed. Subsequently, these themes were deductively evaluated for how they fit into the existing conflict transformation framework (Lederach, 2003).

A fifth common characteristic of qualitative design, "participants' meaning" (Creswell, 2012, p. 47) and the sixth common characteristic of qualitative design, "emergent design" (p.47) are closely related. As themes develop from various perceptions of the participants in the study, the plan for research needs to be flexible. "The key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and engage in the best practice to obtain that information" (p.47). Best practices may mean shifting any phase of the process after entering the field to better capture the participants' experience. As the unit progressed I made adjustments to lesson plans to meet the academic and social-emotional learning needs of the students.

The final common characteristic of qualitative research (Creswell, 2012) is reflexivity. "They (the reader) want to know what prompts our interest in the topics we investigate, to whom we are reporting, and what we personally stand to gain from our study" (p. 47). Because

qualitative researchers cannot claim distance from their subjects and, in fact, claim that a deeper understanding of their subjects and the topic comes from being close, it is important for researchers to claim what meaning constructions they bring to the relationship.

Positionality

To this study, I bring a passion for social justice and children. I taught elementary school for twelve years. I often encountered students who were under-resourced learners, but also lacked emotional and social resources. I found that teaching them skills in conflict resolution and working to build community with them decreased aggression and conflict in my classroom and improved peer relationships, just as described in the literature (Borbely et al., 2005; Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Dudley, & Acikgoz, 2001; Johnson, D. & Johnson, R., 1995; Stevahn et al., 2000). I am also part of a faith community that is working to become a peace church. Peace and justice are important concepts for me to understand in that spiritual endeavor.

Though, I held informal conversations with students over the years that led me to suspect certain ways of thinking, I had no concrete evidence for my suspicions. These speculations came with me to the research. It was important for me to stay close to the existing research, theoretical perspective, the students own words, and to use the classroom teacher's insights as accountability measures.

Teacher Role

The classroom teacher and I worked together to develop the unit to be taught. I offered a sequence of lessons focused on the peace education concepts to be taught. I taught these lessons. I relied on the teacher to assist in synthesizing these concepts with the required curriculum. The teacher continued to teach the classroom content lessons.

The teacher was with her students for six months at the beginning of this unit and so had insight into how students might respond to the material. She also had insight into the interpretation of some of the materials. While the focus group data, observational field notes, and some physical artifacts were kept confidential, we openly discussed the physical artifacts that incorporated the peace education unit and the classroom content. Her perspective on the work samples was important to assessing student learning as well as helping me develop a fuller interpretation of the impact of the unit on students regarding the peace concepts.

Philosophical Assumptions

While it is important to be aware of my background and how it could affect my interpretation of data negatively, my background is also an important attribute to interpretation of the data according to social constructivists (Creswell, 2012). "…(researchers) position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences" (p.25).

Social constructivists base their work on particular assumptions. The ontological assumption of social constructivists is that "multiple realities are constructed through our lived experiences and interaction with others" (Creswell, 2012, p.36). As I conducted interviews and focus groups, and as I collected student work samples and had individual informal conversations with students, I had the opportunity to hear the lived experiences of those that live and work in that classroom. Each individual reality was valued. The epistemological assumption of social constructivists, "Reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences" (Creswell, 2012, p. 36), was lived out as I worked with the teacher and students and interpreted student response. Meanings emerged from the patterns of

interactions and interpretations I observed. Values or axiological assumptions (Creswell, 2012), were honored and navigated among researcher and participants.

Finally, the methodological assumptions of social constructivists align with an inductive method of inquiry where ideas emerge through approaches such as interviewing, observing, and text analysis, among others (Creswell, 2012). A qualitative methodological approach that works well with social constructivist ideals is case study. "…case study research also can excel in accommodating a *relativist* perspective – acknowledging multiple realities having multiple meanings, with findings that are observer-dependent" (Yin, 2013, p. 17). Case studies grounded in social constructivism use these multiple realities to form meaning.

Methodological Approach

A case study is designed to gain a full, real-world perspective of a particular experience (Yin, 2013). "The essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result" (Schramm, 1971, p. 6). According to Yin (2013), there are two parts to a definition of case study as a methodological approach. The first is the scope. The study should concentrate on the complexity of an existing phenomenon within the real-world context. This is particularly appropriate when the occurrence being studied is not clearly differentiated from the context within which it occurs. The second aspect of Yin's (2013), definition includes the attributes of a case study. A case study inquiry uses the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. These data were triangulated after emerging from multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2013). This study drew evidence from student participant observation, student work samples, student focus groups, and teacher interviews.

This research used a single case holistic study design (Yin, 2013). The case was defined as a single classroom, comprised of twenty fifth-grade students, including one teacher, in a rural Midwest elementary school. The study was conducted over 8 weeks, including 12 classroom visits. Each visit included a 60-minute lesson and 120 minutes of observation.

This design was appropriate as a common case (Yin, 2013). The objective of a common case, "is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation – again because of the lessons it might provide about the social processes related to some theoretical interest" (p. 52). The social process of non-violent conflict intervention as it relates to the conflict transformation conceptual framework, is one that needed to be studied as it related to the individual but also to the whole classroom as a community unit. Relationships between students and between students and teacher are interrelated and interdependent. These relationships define the smallest unit of interaction in the classroom allowing for in-depth exploration of student and teacher experience and requiring no further division of units within the case (Yin, 2013).

Participants

According to Yin (2013), case study research design does not refer to a sample. Rather, those being studied are defined by a bounded case that includes a definition of those within the group being studied differentiated from those outside of it. The case is defined then, by who will be studied and how long they will be studied (Yin, 2013). As stated earlier, this case examined one fifth-grade class of twenty students and one teacher, in a rural Midwest elementary school, located in a town of approximately 5,000 residents, approximately 30 miles from the nearest metropolitan city. These students were 10-11 years old. The study lasted eight weeks.

Common case

The classroom chosen for this case study represented a common case. The Midwest state in which the study was conducted is over 90% Caucasian, with African American population numbers around 3% and all other races in smaller numbers ("State data center of Iowa: Census demographics-population, housing, economy, government statistics-state of Iowa" n.d.). The average class size during the 2011-2012 school year for elementary schools in the state was about 20 ("Digest of education statistics, 2013" n.d.). In 2013, about 75% of students in the chosen state met Annual Measurable Objectives on the state test ("State of Iowa department of education public reporting" n.d.). In the chosen state, 39.4% of school-age children were eligible for free and reduced lunch as of 2012 ("Free or reduced-price lunch eligibility | KIDS COUNT Data Center" n.d.).

In order to qualify as a common case the school needed to have at least two-thirds of its students identified as Caucasian, with 20-25 students in the classroom, at least two-thirds of the students proficient on Math and Reading state test scores and close to half of the students on free and reduced lunch. The population of the school chosen for this study is 97% Caucasian and 1% African-American. The school average on the state reading test is 78% and the school average on the state math test is 85%. Forty-eight percent of the student population is on free or reduced lunch. The case study classroom of 20 students has 7 receiving free or reduced lunch, with one student of color.

The Students

The participants for this study were 20 fifth-grade students, 15 of which were 11 years old and 5 of which were 10 years old. Of the 20 students, five receive Special Education services (four with IEPs and 1 with a 504 plan) and seven receive free or reduced lunch. The teacher has

been teaching for 14 years. She characterized the class's academic average as medium, neither uncharacteristically high nor low.

The teacher in the study will be referred to as Mrs. F, to protect her anonymity. Each of the eight students participating in the focus groups were assigned pseudonyms for the same reason. The eight students participating in the focus group are described here. The descriptions are based on conversations with their teacher. Brett, age 11, was described as an "old soul" by his teacher. He prefers to socialize with adults rather than his peers. He has a witty sense of humor. He does not work as hard as he could, but he is very honest and trustworthy. He's an average to high student and receives special services through the Talented and Gifted program. Molly, age 11, is an average to high student. She is a nice girl and works hard in school. She has five sisters and though there was suspicion of serious family troubles at home, she, nor her sisters, showed signs of it affecting their school work. Jenny, age 11, struggles academically. She is sweet but can be sassy and bossy at times. Her parents are divorced. When her mom remarried they moved to this community. She receives special education services and left the room during my visits to receive those services. Sue, age 11, also receives special education services. She struggles some in school, but her family life appears solid. Maggie, age 11, is an average to high student academically. She receives special services through the Talented and Gifted program. Her parents have been recently divorced and remarried. Sometimes she is susceptible to being pulled into other students' drama. Abby, age 11, is a high achieving student and also receives services through the Talented and Gifted program. She is a perfectionist and very sweet. Her family life is solid. Wes, (age 10), is a high achieving student and receives services through the Talented and Gifted program. He has a unique sense of humor and tends to think outside the box. He prefers to socialize with the girls rather than the boys. He is considered honest and

trustworthy. Finally, Adam (age 11), is a high achieving student. He works hard and is a perfectionist. He is a serious student and comes from a solid family.

Developmentally Appropriate

Strong peer relationships are important to student success (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003). Given that younger children and older children have different social goals (Crick & Dodge, 1996), focusing on fifth-grade students as the participants of this study was appropriate. "The grade differences found in social goals indicate that older children prefer relational goals to instrumental goals more frequently than do younger children" (p. 1000). Older children are also better prepared to discuss and reflect on relational processes. "Older children encode and interpret information in social situations more accurately, generate unique responses to those situations more frequently, and are better aware of which responses are appropriate and effective" (Mayeux & Cillessen, 2003, p. 155). Mayeux and Cillessen (2003), state that the change in socio-cognitive skills occurs between ages six and eight. Fifth-grade students are usually ten and eleven years old. Gurucharri and Selman (1982), indicate that fifth-grade students have a higher level of interpersonal understanding than lower grade students, "…first and second graders are not significantly lower (in interpersonal skills) than third and fourth graders but that both these groups are significantly lower than the fifth and sixth-graders…" (p. 926).

Fifth-grade students have developed a desire to create strong interpersonal relationships, the ability to think about these relationships and reflect on their role in them, and even some of the skills necessary to maintain them.

> …there are advances in children's capacity for interpersonal understanding and causal reasoning about others' behavior. Relative to preschoolers, elementary school-age

> children are more capable of understanding the multiple perspectives in a situation and thus are better able to respond to attempts to explain different ways of handling a situation. (Kliewer et al., 1996, p. 2339)

For these reasons, students in fifth-grade are at a particularly appropriate developmental age for this study.

Classroom Environment

The classroom walls were covered in various posters. Many posters were inspirationally focused such as “You learn something every day if you pay attention” “Hard work beats talent when talent does not work hard” “If you have good thoughts they will shine outside your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely – Roald Dahl”. Other posters were related to expected behaviors such as, “If you cannot be kind, be quiet” and “Respect is not a gift. You have to earn it” Still others related to classroom procedures and management such as a class schedule, rules, homework club chart, calendar, Accelerated Reader (AR) points and birthdays. The final type of poster that decorated the walls was instructional such as, book recommendations, figurative language, reading strategies and writing traits. The classroom was brightly decorated with one wall painted a deep pink.

There were two items that were used to directly manage behavior. One was a chart divided into four sections. The first section was blank and had a clothespin for each child clipped to it. The second had a 10, the third a 20 and the bottom section had a sad face and the words “no recess” Almost every time I visited, all the clips were on the top. Occasionally one or two clips were on the 10. I never saw a clip at the bottom. The second item for behavior management was a brownie pan attached to the wall with magnetic brownies. Every time I visited there were 2 brownie points in the pan. I never saw it change.

The classroom included several types of furniture. There was a teacher desk and student desks but also three couches and two soft chairs. There was a chart to manage whose turn it was to use the couches and chairs posted above the teacher's desk. An interactive whiteboard and a computer were on one side of the room, and another computer was on the other side of the room. The television rounded out the technology equipment in the room. The classroom also included several bookshelves full of books.

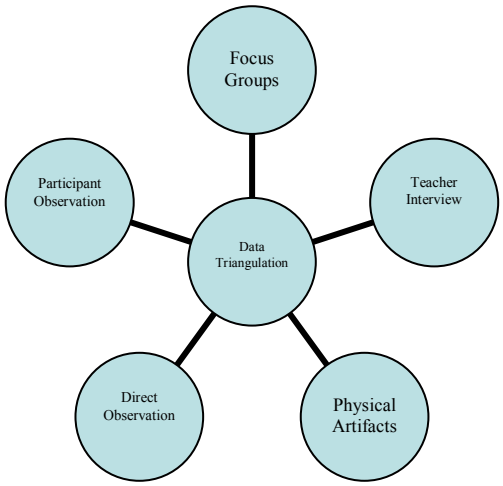
The students were always sitting in table groups of four or five, although the arrangement changed several times over the course of my visits. The teacher's desk was pushed over to one side of the room, facing the student desks.

Data Collection

In order to collect data, I approached a principal of a school that meets the requirements of the common case to request a collaborative relationship with a fifth-grade teacher. There were two fifth-grade teachers in the school. One of them already had a student teacher assigned to the class. The principal suggested the teacher who did not have someone already working with her. Additionally, the teacher chosen had more classroom experience than the other teacher. I outlined the non-violent conflict intervention lessons to be taught with the teacher and discussed ways this would augment the regular classroom curriculum. The classroom teacher and I developed a 12 lesson unit to be taught over 8 weeks. Accordingly, we determined what could be taught between my visits in the regular curriculum that would extend the lesson that she had taught when I was present. Five data collection methods were used; direct observations, focus groups, interview, physical artifacts, and participant observation. These methods satisfied the first principle of case study data collection according to Yin (2013), "use of multiple sources of

evidence" (p. 118). Before analyzing the data, all student names were removed and replaced with pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of participants. The teacher is referred to by only Mrs. F.

Figure 3.1 Data Collection Methods



Participant Observation

Recess, lunchroom, and classroom interactions were observed during visits. I observed for an average total of two hours each visit. Attention was paid to what conflicts arose, how they arose, and what actions students and teachers took in response. Narrative notes were taken when conflicts arose. The notes were then coded using the conflict coding chart (see Appendix B for coding chart).

The first codes, adapted from Deutsch's (1977) theoretical typology, includes four types. Deutsch originally included five: control of resources, differences in preferences, difference in values, differences in beliefs, and differences in the nature of the relationship between individuals involved (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotten, Harris et al., 1995). For the purposes of this study, differences in the values and beliefs were condensed into one code. Distinguishing

between what is and what should be (values and beliefs) was not germane to the purpose of the study. Condensing them into one code simplified the coding and reporting process.

The second code that was used to analyze the narrative field notes was conflict resolution type. Johnson D. and Johnson R., (1995) identified five types of agreements: no agreement, third-party imposed agreement, avoidance of each other, self-wins, other wins, forgiving and apologizing, new solution agreeable to both parties, and fully negotiated mutual agreement. For the sake of simplification these types were condensed into four codes: no agreement/avoidance of each other, forgiving and apologizing, distributive negotiation, and integrative negotiation. A third code was assigned to whether the conflict was resolved through third party intervention: "y" for yes and "n" for no. These codes helped in analyzing the narrative evidence collected. I was able to identify patterns over the course of time and participant. The narrative material was important to the interpretation of these patterns.

As I led instruction, I was an integral part of the classroom during the course of the study. This provided a unique opportunity to gather evidence in order to better understand the students' and teacher's experience. "Another distinctive opportunity is the ability to perceive reality from the viewpoint of someone 'inside,' a case rather than external to it" (Yin, 2013, p. 117). Extensive field notes were kept regarding my experiences in leading discussions and activities with the students as they encountered non-violent conflict intervention processes and began to respond to them. Notes were taken during and right after the lesson was taught, as the class walked to lunch, during lunch, as the class walked back from lunch and during recess. Notes were taken regarding classroom decorations, student interactions with each other and with me, as well as student responses to the material. The notes were divided into three sections, lesson, lunch, and recess. Also included in field notes, were notes regarding meetings with the teacher at

the very beginning of the study, before meeting the students, notes written after reflection outside the regular visit time, and lesson plan notes.

Student Focus Groups

The second collection method used in this study was to conduct two student focus groups (see Appendices C and D for focus group scripts). The focus group had two tasks, "…(a) to follow your own line of inquiry, as reflected by your case study protocol, and (b) to ask your actual (conversational) questions in an unbiased manner that also serves the needs of your line of inquiry" (Yin, 2013, p.110). I created the questions for the focus groups based on past experience with how students and teachers view conflict intervention processes. The questions were designed to provide students with an opportunity to respond to Lederach's (2003) concept of conflict transformation and to explore the change they experienced through the interaction with those concepts.

The students that participated for the focus groups were chosen in consultation with the teacher. We discussed the characteristics of students that would be helpful to the process. I suggested choosing students who were confident and thoughtful, who would not be shy about sharing their ideas but who tended to make connections across concepts in regular class discussion. Both the teacher and I made a list. Then we compared our lists. We settled together on the students who would participate.

The focus groups of eight and then seven students (Creswell, 2012) modeled after Cheng (2007) were conducted in their classroom after school, during the fourth and eighth weeks of the unit. Both focus groups included the same students with the exception of one student. She did not deliver the note informing her parents about the second group meeting and so did not have permission to stay. After school proved to be the most convenient time for students, teachers, and

parents. One focus group was held in the science lab and the other was held in the classroom. These locations were an appropriate locations for the focus group as they were familiar and students were accustomed to thinking and sharing in those places (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Students were chosen by the teacher for their interest in participation, their ability to express themselves clearly and their willingness to offer insights. I began with seven students chosen for the focus group. Earlier in the week of the day the focus group was to be held, I was informed that another student would be staying after school that day because she had plans with one of the focus group participants for later in the day. The teacher asked if she could be added. I agreed. Students were invited to participate through a letter. Consent and assent were obtained prior to the beginning of the unit. At the end of the focus group, students were provided with a snack. At the end of the unit, I provided the class with a pizza party during which we played some cooperative games in the gym.

The sequence of questions was as follows: (a) Opening questions; (b) Introductory questions. These questions helped to introduce students to the topic of discussion; (c) Transfer questions. “Introductory questions aim to introduce the discussed topic while transfer questions are intended to realistically connect participants to the discussed topic” (Cheng, 2007, p. 196); (d) Key questions. These questions were concentrated on the research questions and were the heart of the focus group session; (e) Specific questions took the key questions deeper; (f) Closing questions helped the participants come to a conclusion about the topic; and (g) Final questions. These questions allowed the participants to make comments about the topic that may have been overlooked earlier in the session.

The focus groups lasted approximately 30 minutes each. The conversations were digitally recorded and then transcribed. The transcript was uploaded to a computer program called Dedoose (Dedoose, 2014) for analysis.

Teacher Interview

An interview process, consisting of two interviews, was conducted with the classroom teacher as part of the study (see Appendix E for teacher interview questions). The first interview was designed to learn about the teacher's background and help contextualize the teacher's experience with non-violent conflict intervention. The teacher described her teaching and learning experiences with non-violent conflict intervention process in concrete detail. And the second interview allowed the teacher to reflect on the meaning of her experience with non-violent conflict intervention process in her classroom. I wrote the questions for the interview based on Lederach's (2003) concept of conflict transformation. Each interview was conducted at a location of the teacher's choice, in the science lab and then in her classroom during planning time, to reduce any anxiety (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). The first interview was conducted during week five and the second interview during week eight. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Both teacher interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes. The transcript was uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014). At the end of the unit, I gave the teacher a $5 gift card to amazon.com.

Physical Artifacts

Over the course of the unit, there were opportunities to collect student work. These served as physical artifacts for analysis. I collected several types of physical artifacts. I differentiated physical artifacts from field notes by who created the artifact. If the item was

student created individually, in small groups, or as a class it was considered a physical artifact. Anything created by the classroom teacher or myself was described in field notes.

Group brainstorm. Several times over the course of unit, the class's thoughts were recorded on either the white-board or poster paper. These thoughts were recorded digitally by taking a picture and either transcribed or uploaded directly into the computer program, (Dedoose, 2014), for analysis.

Conflict posters. During the first lesson, students were asked to work in table groups of four to create a collage on a piece of poster board from pictures they chose from magazines to represent their understanding of conflict. I took a picture of each of these posters and stored them digitally. Then I described each poster in a document for the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Conflict escalator. After reading *A Hateful of Trouble* (Kreidler, Furlong, Work/Family Directions, & Project Adventure, 1995) aloud students completed a conflict escalator graphic organizer in small groups. These were collected, photographed, copied to an electronic document, and uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Conflict webs. As part of a lesson about cause and effect the class created a web to illustrate the connections between players, causes, and effects in a conflict. Each of these main concepts was represented by a circle and students brainstormed sub ideas for the concept. Then as a class they decided which sub ideas should be connected between the main ideas. This web was recorded on the white board. During lunch, it was erased. Upon returning from lunch, students were asked to recreate the web in small groups on a graphic organizer I provided to them. The webs were transcribed into the computers analysis program (Dedoose, 2014) for analysis.

Fingerprints. I provided the students with some broad categories that define identity. The class then identified sub descriptors for each category. This was recorded on a piece of poster paper. Then I asked students to make a list of statements that were true about themselves that addressed the categories and to include their stance on conflict. When this was completed, I handed them an enlarged copy of their personal fingerprint. (I had collected fingerprints the week prior to this visit.) I also gave them a piece of tracing paper and some thin markers. They were asked to transpose the statements regarding their identity onto the tracing paper, lining their words up with the lines of their fingerprint. These were collected, digitally photographed and then described in a document on the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Pro/Con lists. These lists were created after students had read an article from their curriculum regarding cloning, organized into pros and cons. They had discussed their position with other students and created a pro/con list about the article in groups. The list I collected was completed individually about a topic of their choice.

Feelings journals. I provided a template for students to keep track of their feelings, what triggered the feelings and how they responded to it. This was distributed during visit 6 and then they were encouraged to work on it independently outside of class. I also provided time to update it at each subsequent visit. During visit 11, I assigned a writing prompt as homework. Students were asked to look over their journals and answer the following questions (a) what was the most common feeling you had; (b) what was you most common response to that feeling; (c) what will you do in the future when you have that feeling. The pages from the journal were photographed, copied into word documents, and uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014). The answers to the homework questions were recorded as a memo on each file in the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Bucket notes. During week 7, I introduced the idea of bucket notes. Based off the book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* (McCloud, 2006), students used a template to write something they appreciated about someone else. They delivered these notes to students in their classroom mailboxes. Notes that were written to me were photographed, copied to a word document, and uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

I-message practice skits. After being introduced to I-messages, students were asked to practice using I-messages for conflicts from a list brainstormed by the class with a partner. The interactions were recorded on an iPad and then transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Written I-messages. After practicing with a partner, students were asked to write an I-message for a conflict of their choice on a piece of paper. These were collected, photographed, copied into a word document and uploaded to the computer program for analysis (Dedoose, 2014).

Final Role Plays. Student small groups were asked to develop a conflict skit. They chose the conflict but were asked to use the ABCD method, including I-messages and rephrasing, to solve the conflict they chose. These skits were recorded on the iPad and then transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Reflections. At the conclusion of the final lesson, students were asked to write a final reflection on what they had learned in the unit about conflict. These were collected and transcribed in the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Thank you notes. The students were asked by the classroom teacher to write thank you notes to me. Some of these notes were transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Design Issues

Construct validity

Construct validity (Yin, 2013) describes how a study is fashioned to adequately measure the outcomes and subjective interpretations of the study. Three strategies are available to increase construct validity that include (a) multiple sources of evidence; (b) establishing a chain of evidence and; (c) conducting member check (Yin, 2013). This study addressed these areas of construct validity by first collecting evidence from multiple sources: interviews, focus groups, work samples and field notes. Secondly, a chain of evidence was established. I kept all student work not related to classroom assessment, in electronic files labeled with student pseudonyms. All observational notes were kept electronically in files on my password protected computer. All digital recordings and transcriptions were kept in computer files on a password protected computer. Finally, I conducted a member check with the teacher and the focus groups participants (Yin, 2013). The teacher had the opportunity to read the transcription of her interviews and I met with the focus group students a final time to go over the portions of the focus group transcript that was used as evidence in the final project. I read their statements back to them and asked them if they think I represented them accurately.

Credibility and Transferability

There are several ways credibility (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002) was established throughout this study. Two of these have already been mentioned, triangulation of data and member checks. A third way to establish credibility is through prolonged time in the field. This

study took place over an 8 week period, with 12 lessons, each of 60 minutes, and an additional 120 minutes of observation. This was approximately 36 hours in the classroom, which does not include time spent in focus groups, teacher interviews, and teacher collaboration.

Anfara et al. (2002), list two ways for establishing transferability. These strategies are purposive sampling and providing thick description. The participants for this study were chosen for their developmental age, their school demographic as it fit the common case in the state where the study was conducted, and their location. The teacher assisted in choosing students for the focus group who were most likely to thoughtfully participate. Field notes, audio recordings, and video recordings allowed for providing thick description of the participant experience. Yin (2013), suggests a third way to create transferability. A reciprocal relationship between the conflict transformation conceptual framework (Lederach, 2003) and collected data was fostered in order to corroborate student and teacher response, and/or modify or reject interpretations, and/or advance Lederach's theoretical concepts.

Data Analysis

The first strategy I used for analysis was working the data from the "ground up" (Yin, 2013). I analyzed the data to determine what patterns emerged on their own. In order to identify emerging patterns, I used open and axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). I read the focus group and interview transcripts for important or recurring words. I listed those words and then sorted them into groups for similarity. I assigned each group of words a theme and then coded the transcript using the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014). I reviewed the physical artifacts for how they fit with the themes. The field notes were coded using the coding sheet (Appendix B) and then compared to the themes. When new themes emerged from the physical artifacts or field notes, the transcripts were again read for those themes.

The second analysis strategy, I used from Yin (2013), was relying on theoretical propositions. Examining the conflict transformation conceptual framework led to a possible proposition: students are more empowered and resolutions are longer lasting when non-violent conflict intervention processes, based on conflict transformation are used, independent of teacher arbitration, to solve conflicts. Data from this study was analyzed to see if this proposition was upheld. Additionally, the data was analyzed using Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework. Each lesson in the unit was designed to build capacity in one of the three inquiries of the conflict transformation framework. In considering the data collected from each lesson, I compared student responses to Lederach's (2003) definition of the framework component.

Inquiry 1 Lesson

Lederach's (2003), conceptual model of conflict transformation includes three inquiries. The first of these is the presenting situation. Three overlapping spheres labeled issue, patterns, and history comprise this inquiry, "This reminds us that the immediate issues are rooted in a context -in patterns of relationships and structures, all with a history" (Lederarch, 2003, p. 34). Four of the lessons taught during the unit were directly related to inquiry 1. These were lesson 1 "What is Conflict," lesson 2 "Conflict Cause/Effect," lesson 3 "Conflict Complexity," and lesson 5 "Response to Conflict." Lesson 4 was included in inquiry 3.

Lesson 1 focused on the definition of conflict. Students were asked to create collages that illustrated their perception of conflict. After sharing their collages, the student brainstormed a list of words completing the sentence, "Conflict is…" Then I presented two metaphors as models for conflict. The first metaphor was an iceberg and the second a tree. Both metaphors were intended to demonstrate that there is much unseen or below the surface when addressing an issue. This

speaks directly to inquiry 1 (Lederach, 2003) in establishing the existence of a context for conflict.

Lesson 2 focused on the causes and effects of conflict. A conflict escalator (Kreidler et al., 1995) was introduced. This graphic organizer was used to map the effects of each event in the conflict but instead of beginning the events at the bottom of the escalator, the immediate issue being discussed was placed on the middle step of the escalator. Then the organizer was filled out working down and up from the middle. Shaping the organization of the conflict this way, again demonstrated the existence of context for the presenting situation. Where the conflict becomes visible is not where it began. Conflictual situations arise out of patterns that are based in histories of feelings and behaviors.

Lesson 3 was about developing an awareness of the complexity of conflict. I began the lesson by reading aloud "*Chrysanthemum"* (Henkes, 2008). We identified the conflicts in the story as I read and discussed the causes and effects. Then we brainstormed a list of conflicts and created a web on the board that included players, causes and effects for one of the conflicts on the list. I read another book, "*Little Blue, Little Yellow"* (Lionni, 1995), and asked students to work in groups to create a web of the conflict in the book. Upon returning to the room from lunch the web on the board had been erased. I asked the students to recreate it in groups. Students created conflict webs to demonstrate how causes, effects, and players were connected in a conflict. The purpose of the exercise was to clarify patterns of connections in conflicts, making it an effective way to further explore the presenting situation and its context.

To begin Lesson 5 I read "*Voices in the Park"* (Publishing & Browne, 2001) aloud to the class. We discussed the different perspectives about the same event in the book. Students were asked to identify pros and cons of a topic, and in doing so, further explored the context of a

presenting situation. They shared their differing viewpoints about a topic with each and were asked to reflect on how hearing someone else's point of view changed or did not change their own. We discussed that seeing another's perspective might be important to solving a conflict and opposing viewpoints are an integral component to the patterns and history that create a conflict.

Inquiry 2 Lessons

The second inquiry is comprised of three circles labeled, solutions, relationships, and structures (Lederach, 2003). The purpose of inquiry 2 is to help to imagine a desired future. Lederach (2003) makes sure to point out that an imagined future is something that provides orientation as one makes decisions. It cannot be concretely defined because as components of the conflict transform, possibilities for the future change as well. Relationships, structures, and solutions are possible paths for addressing presenting issues. Inquiry 2 is about hope. What are the hoped for outcomes? Five lessons were meant to help develop inquiry 2. These lessons were Lesson 8, "I-messages" Lesson 9, "Active Listening – Building Empathy" and Lessons 10, 11, and 12 which focused on the integrative negotiation process. Each of these lessons focused on building new relationships and restructuring communication in order to find solutions.

Lesson 8 began with asking students if they had filled anyone's bucket and if they had filled out their feelings journal. I then read aloud "*Each Kindness"* (Woodson, 2012). I discussed how the main characters interacted, connected it to filling one's bucket, and asked how it might have ended differently if the characters had made different decisions. Then I introduced I-messages. We brainstormed a list of conflicts. I asked them to choose one, turn to their partner, and practice using an I-message. I asked them when an I-message might have helped in the story I had read and then asked them to choose a conflict, not necessarily from the list, and write an I-

message. I collected these. Then students worked in groups to create skits using I-messages. These were video-taped.

For Lesson 9, I began again with asking if anyone had filled anyone's bucket and if they had filled out their feelings journal. I also asked if anyone had used an I-message. Then I read "*What was I Scared of*?"(Seuss, 1997). As I read, I stopped and rephrased passages in my own words. I pointed out how what I said was different than the words in the book, but still had the same message. I introduced the idea of rephrasing and then we listed other listening skills on the board. I told them to think of a short story to tell their partner and then asked them to practice rephrasing each other's stories. Then I asked them to choose a conflict, write 3 or 4 I-messages about that conflict and share out to the class. As the students shared, I rephrased their statements. I connected this back to the pro/con list from a previous lesson. Then students created and acted out skits where they used an I-message and it was rephrased.

During Lesson 10 I introduced the ABCD, 6-step integrative negotiation process. I began the lesson checking whether anyone had stories about filling buckets, using feelings journals, I-messages or rephrasing. I defined win/win vs. win/lose vs. lose/lose solutions to conflict and gave an example of each. Then I introduced the ABCD Poster. "A" stands for ask. Students recognize that a conflict exists and express a desire to resolve it constructively. Then, each person states what they want and why. Next, each person expresses their feelings and rephrases to show understanding of what the other person wants. "B" stands for brainstorm. Students invent three or more possible win/win solution options. "C" stands for choose. Students decided on what the best option is for a mutually satisfying conclusion. And "D" stands for do. Students shake hands to signify their agreement. This process was based on a process outlined in "Adventures in Peacemaking" (Kreidler et al., 1995) and the six step process outlined by Stevahn

et al. (2002). After introducing the steps we chose a conflict from the class list and worked through the process together. I then passed out a worksheet that outlined the steps and asked them to use a flier that was being used in their classroom curriculum to teach functional text. I asked them to use the information in the flier to negotiate in pairs and then again in groups of four, which option would be best.

Lesson 11 expanded on lesson 10. I read aloud a portion of an informational text piece from their classroom curriculum related to the western railroad expansion and its impact on Native Americans. As a class, we created a chart on the board comparing the two perspectives outlined in the text. Then we took another issue, the Americanization of Native Americans through public school, and created another chart comparing perspectives. I reviewed the ABCD method for negotiation and talked through the railroad issue using the method. Students followed me by filling out a worksheet outlining the process. Finally, I asked students to choose an issue from their life and work in table groups to complete another ABCD worksheet. Lesson 12 provided the students an opportunity to further develop their negotiated conflict from the previous lesson into a skit. These skits were performed for the class.

Inquiry 3 Lessons

The third inquiry is defined by the episode and the epicenter at the center of a sphere surrounded by factors that affect how the center will change and develop. Surrounding the episode and the epicenter nucleus, are personal, cultural, relational, and structural factors. As the nucleus is acted upon by the presenting situation and the hope for the future, these other factors impact the episode/epicenter nucleus (Lederach, 2003). The lessons focusing on inquiry 3 related mainly to personal and relational factors. Elementary students typically have little input on structural and cultural factors that impact their lives. They usually do not have a say in the way

schools or homes are systematized. Lessons that were meant to address inquiry 3 were Lesson 4 "Identity" and Lessons 6 and 7, "Feelings" All three lessons related to personal and relational factors.

Lesson 4 was based on defining one's identity. First, the class brainstormed aspects of identity. I provided the words "personality" and "beliefs" to get started. We discussed each aspect and further defined it. Then I asked students to write statements about themselves that related to each category of identity. I gave them each a piece of tracing paper, a copy of their fingerprint and markers and asked them to write their statements on the tracing paper along the lines of their fingerprint. Lesson 5 was part of inquiry 1.

For lesson 6, I began by reviewing an article they had previously read in the classroom curriculum containing a particular perspective. I asked them to work in groups to highlight evidence that supported the author's perspective. We discussed the article and compared the structure of this article which only presented one side, to the pro/cons article we had discussed previously. I then talked about how when we feel strongly about something, it's easy to only present one point of view. It's important to understand our feelings when we are entering a conflict so that we can address them and they don't keep us from seeing another perspective. We brainstormed a list of feelings words, a game in which we made faces to represent different feelings, and then I introduced the feelings journal. I made sure to point out that no feeling was bad. Sometimes they felt bad but feelings such as anger could also be used to do good things.

To begin lesson 7, I reviewed a text they had previously read out of their reading curriculum. I asked the students to line up according to how strongly they felt about the position taken in the text. We discussed how it was organized differently than the other texts we had read and that sometimes when we take a position, a conflict may be impacted by how strong our

relationship is with each instead of what we think about the issue. I read *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* (McCloud, 2006). We discussed the kinds of relationships that can be created by filling another person's bucket and how we could fill different people's buckets. I passed out bucket notes and gave them time to fill one out for someone.

When analyzing data collected during and after these lessons, I considered how student responses demonstrated understanding of the inquiry. Also, important were student thoughts and feelings about the components of the inquiry, and their ability to apply it in their lives. Student artifacts, participant observation notes, observation field notes, teacher interview transcripts, and student focus group transcripts were assessed according to the framework to determine student experience.

Limitations

Some of the limitations of this study are that only one classroom and one teacher was studied. Though this single group of students may have responded to non-violent conflict intervention in certain ways related to the conflict transformation conceptual framework, not all or even most, classrooms may respond the same way. It is possible that having only seven students, instead of the original eight, during the second focus group impacted the outcome. Also, this classroom was in a rural setting and may not have had the same perspective as urban or suburban children and teachers. Finally, this study, with its focus on fifth-grade, did not illuminate responses from primary education or secondary education students.

Delimitations

This study was conducted in one classroom of fifth-grade students with their teacher in a rural Midwest community. As stated earlier, fifth-grade students fall within a range of students

particularly suited to the study. However, fourth grade or sixth-grade students also fall within this range. Older and younger students were not chosen, because in my experience, I've had the most success with encouraging students who are ten or eleven years old to reflect and talk about their experience. This setting was chosen, instead of an urban or suburban setting, because of the dearth of research based in rural settings and based on my proximity to the research site.

Summary

This qualitative case study based in social constructivism explored the experience of fifth-grade students and their teacher in a small, rural Midwest elementary school with conflict intervention processes based on Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework. I collaborated with the teacher to incorporate peace concepts such as integrative negotiation and communication skills into the curriculum, and observed the patterns of conflict and its resolution that emerged. The patterns were analyzed in light of Lederach's (2003) framework. Evidence was collected through focus groups, interviews, direct observation, physical artifacts, and participant observation. The evidence was coded for types of conflict, type of resolution, and whether a third party was involved in arbitration. In considering the importance of positive social relationships to student success, this study added to the existing research regarding non-violent conflict intervention processes in public schools.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Conflict Transformation Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study was to explore student experiences with a peace education unit based on Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation conceptual framework. The first analysis described here examined the lessons from the unit and how they related to the framework and then describes student response to those lessons. Lederach's (2003) conceptual model of conflict transformation includes three inquiries. The first inquiry is The Presenting Situation. The second inquiry is The Horizon of the Future and the third inquiry is The Development of Change Processes.

Students demonstrated comprehension of the different components of the framework. Regarding inquiry 1, they could identify conflicts, identify causes and effects of the conflict, and ways the different aspects of a conflict impacted one another depending on the context. Additionally, they could identify different perspectives about a common event. Regarding inquiry 2, they could use I-messages and negotiation strategies within the classroom while doing skits and they could discuss times when these skills were useful or could be useful. Regarding inquiry 3, they could describe themselves and how their personalities might impact how they think and feel about and how they approach conflict. They also discussed how their feelings impacted their approach to conflict. They enthusiastically participated in trying to build strong relationships with one another through writing appreciation notes. The students clearly demonstrated an understanding of the aspects of the framework and how those components contribute to better relationships and resolution of conflicts.

Inquiry 1: The Presenting Situation

The first inquiry in the framework is The Presenting Situation. Three overlapping spheres labeled issue, patterns, and history comprise this inquiry, "…reminding us that the immediate issues are rooted in a context -in patterns of relationships and structures, all with a history" (Lederarch, 2014, p. 34). Four of the lessons taught during the unit were directly related to inquiry 1. These were, lesson 1 "What is Conflict," lesson 2 "Conflict Cause/Effect," lesson 3 "Conflict Complexity," and lesson 5 "Response to Conflict".

Over the course of the first five visits, students demonstrated an understanding of the complexity of conflict. They learned to identify it and analyze it for its causes and effects. They learned to identify the different factors that contribute to its development and escalation. And they learned to identify and appreciate differing perspectives about the same occurrence, despite their own position.

Student experience. While creating the conflict posters, occasionally students asked me what conflict was or if a certain picture represented conflict. Despite the fact that I had not given any introduction as to what conflict is, I was confident that they could determine with the help of their group mates how to visually represent it. Consequently, I responded, "What do you think?" or "What do your group members think?"

Figure 4.1. Conflict Poster 1. This photo depicted one group's representation of conflict.

Conflict Poster 1, figure 4.1 showed several examples of conflict. The students thought that the mosquito would cause negative feelings and so was an example of conflict. The pictures of the man yelling and the woman with a pained look on her face were examples of domestic conflict. The students at first disagreed about including the picture of the exploding volcano but, based on the same logic as the mosquito image, decided, in the end, to include it.

One of the pictures included on Conflict Poster 1 seemed to depict the opposite of conflict. The picture of the people holding string standing in a circle seemed to convey more a sense of community and working together, than conflict. Other groups made similar decisions in their choice of pictures and words.

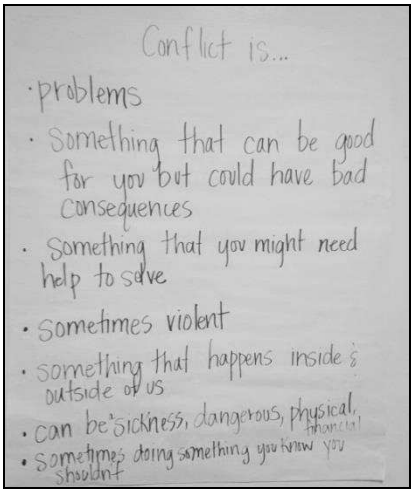
Figure 4.2. Conflict Poster 2. This photo depicted another group's representation of conflict.

Conflict Poster 2 included the words, "Feeding Hope" in the center of their poster. Though these words seemed antithetical to conflict, other images demonstrated a more traditional view of conflict. The image of two men facing off across railroad tracks, the image of a man falling with the words "no parachute", both depicted conflictual situations. Perhaps the phrase, "Feeding Hope" and the image of the people in a circle conveyed an unarticulated understanding of a need for a positive response to conflict.

Figure 4.3. Conflict Poster 13. This photo depicted a third group's representation of conflict.

While Conflict Poster 3 included many pictures representing conflict, the wolf, and the three pigs, a broken down car, a soldier with a rifle, and an injured woman, this group also included a picture of people picking up trash. When asked about this picture, students pointed to the problem of trash as the conflict but also discussed the need to fix it. This supported the suggestion that students identified solutions as part of the conflict when looking for images.

Figure 4.4. Conflict Brainstorm 1. This photo depicted the list created by the class after creating group collages. It showed the class' understanding of conflict as a concept.



Based on the posters, the students brainstormed the above list of definitions for conflict. These activities assisted students in identifying the present issues that constituted conflicts.

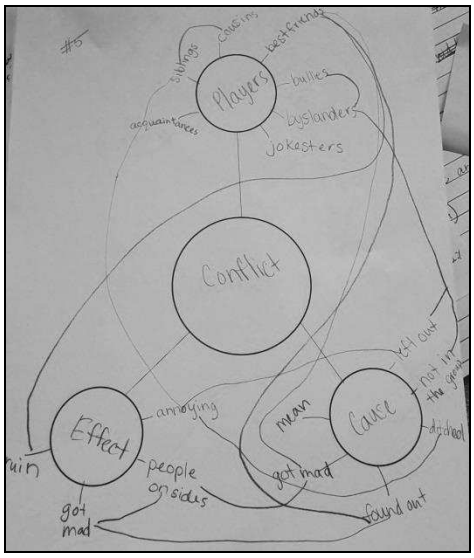
However, an understanding that conflict is complex was already evident as students included seemingly opposing viewpoints of conflict and stated that sometimes conflict can be "good for you".

Cause and effect. As students explored conflict further through the conflict escalator, the intention was for them to understand that a presenting situation emerged from feelings caused by other events. Two student groups identified anger as a precursor to the presenting situation in the *Hatful of Trouble* story (Kreidler et al., 1995). Abby, Ron, and Kim wrote, "Shand came to school with a new hat and he got mad" on the first step. Renee and Andy wrote, "feeling furious" on the second step but left the first step empty, not indicating an antecedent to the feeling. While only two student groups indicated feelings on the lower levels of their escalator, during class discussion students demonstrated understanding that the argument between the two main characters was not the first incident to consider in the analysis of the conflict. Field notes from visit 2 state, "I asked them if they had ever had an experience where someone came in and appeared to do something mean for no reason. Many nodded. No one said no". I pointed out that many times the reason for the feelings that cause the outburst are unseen and students agreed.

As students created conflict webs, they illustrated the complex relationships between individuals and events during a conflict. The causes and effects of a conflict changed depending on the individuals involved. These connections created patterns that were contextualized by history. Conflict Web 5 (fig. 4.5) showed an awareness of several players including acquaintances, siblings, cousins, best friends, bullies, bystanders, and jokesters. The creators of the web identified that sometimes conflicts can ruin relationships between best friends, that it is annoying when people feel left out, that bullies and bystanders leave others out by creating

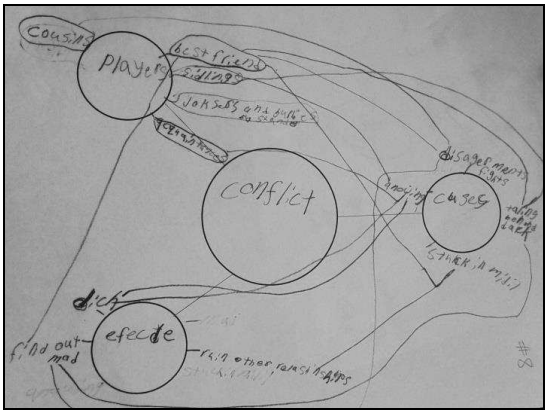
groups where not everyone is included, and that when people took sides it made the players angry.

Figure 4.5. Conflict Web 5. This photo depicted the players, causes and effects in conflict understood by one group.



Conflict Web 8, (fig. 4.6) identified many of the same players, with the addition of cousins. Some of the connections were different, however. The creators of this web identified that when one found out they were being talked about they get mad, that getting mad leads to disagreements, and that getting "stuck in the middle" ruined other relationships.

Figure 4.6. Conflict Web 8. This photo depicted the players, causes and effects in conflict understood by another group.



Through completing the conflict webs, students illustrated that there were many people involved in conflicts and that one event had many outcomes. They also recognized that certain outcomes seemed to follow particular events from particular people on a consistent basis. All the webs showed an understanding of hurt feelings resulting from being left out and all the webs recognized that even people you trust could be guilty of committing hurtful acts.

Pros and Cons. Student understanding of the presenting situation was further developed through exploring the pros and cons of a particular situation about which they felt passionate. Three students addressed the issue of the sixth-grade moving from the elementary school to the high school. Two students addressed whether uniforms should be worn in schools. Two students addressed the idea of adding more time to recess, and two students addressed the seating arrangement that had been imposed upon them in the lunchroom as a result of gossip getting out of control.

During my first four visits to the school, I observed a great deal of talking in the lunchroom and what appeared to be "message delivering" between groups. An excerpt from my visit four notes read,

> Brett was talking to students and then he went over and talked to the custodians and then he went over and talked to a different group of students. And then he ran over and talked to another group of students until the custodian told him to stay in one place. Boys are huddled around him talking about things.

Conversations with other adults affirmed that notes like this were related to a gossip problem in the class that was occurring both inside and outside school. The result was that by week five, students had assigned seats in the lunchroom, with one empty seat between students.

This issue directly affected the students as reflected in Heather's pro/con list.

Table 4.1.

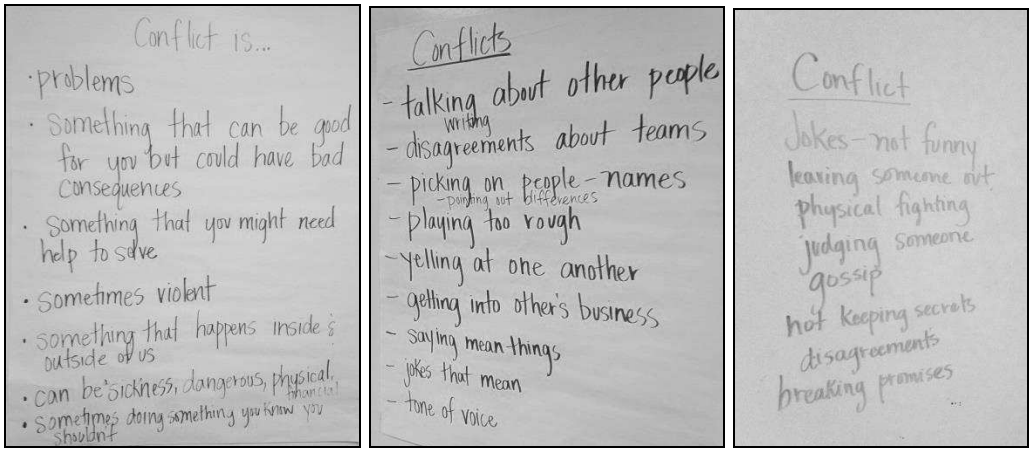
Heather's Pro/Con list. This list illustrated Heather's understanding of the imposed seating arrangement in the lunchroom.

Topic: Picking own seating arrangement at lunch	
Pro	Con
• You could talk to friends • You could talk about the problem and try to work it out • You could sit by your friends • You wouldn't have to sit by people you don't like	• You would talk a lot • People stir the pot with problems • People have to sit by themselves • Taking other peoples food

This table illustrated that Heather understood there was a problem to solve in the lunchroom and that the current solution did solve the problem. She also recognized what had been lost in that solution. The statement, "you could talk about the problem and try to work it out" implied that possibly adult arbitration was not seen as necessary or wanted. She seemed to believe that had the students been given the opportunity, they might have found a different solution.

Change in conflict definitions. Lederach (2003) states, "the immediacy of the presenting issues, and the energy released as people contend over these issues, defines the 'episodic' expression of the conflict" (p. 36). Helping students identify the aspects of the episode through conceptualizing conflict, recognizing connections, and analyzing the different components clearly defined the conflict for the next step. "The potential for constructive change lies in our ability to recognize, understand, and redress what has happened" (Lederach, 2003, p. 35-36). As students worked through the unit their understanding of conflict was clarified and solidified as illustrated in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7. Definitions of Conflict. These three posters represented ideas collected through brainstorming sessions during visits one, three and eight respectively.



Student understanding of conflict developed from broad and general during visit one to specific conflicts during visits three and eight. Some of the conflicts listed for visit three and eight were the same, "jokes that (are) mean" and "jokes-not funny." Some disappeared, "yelling at one another" and "tone of voice." But new ones also appeared, "not keeping secrets" and "break promises." As student understanding of conflict grew, it is possible that they recognized events as conflictual that had not been recognized before. It is also possible that some conflicts listed during visit three were redefined during visit eight. For instance, "getting into other's business" could have later been recognized more specifically, as "judging someone" or "not keeping secrets" or "breaking promises."

Inquiry 2: The Horizon of the Future

The second group of circles (solutions, relationships, and structures) comprising inquiry 2 (Lederach, 2003) helped to imagine a desired future. Lederach pointed out that an imagined future is something that provides orientation as one makes decisions. It cannot be concretely defined because, as components of the conflict transform, possibilities for the future will change as well. Relationships, structures, and solutions are possible paths for addressing presenting

issues. Inquiry 2 is about hope. A central question for inquiry 2 is, what are the hoped for outcomes? Five lessons were meant to help develop inquiry 2. These lessons were Lesson 8, "I-messages" Lesson 9, "Active Listening – Building Empathy" and Lessons 10, 11, and 12 which focused on the integrative negotiation process. Each of these lessons focused on building new relationships and restructuring communication in order to find solutions. The students enjoyed practicing these skills and expressed ideas about feeling more open towards their peers and, less antagonistic. It was during these visits too, however, that students began to express some reluctance and skepticism about real world application of these skills. They began to express worry about how others outside of the classroom might receive them if they used these new found skills.

Student experience. During lesson eight, students learned to write I-messages. These statements were meant to replace communication that blamed and accused. I-messages encouraged students to name their feeling, the behavior that caused the feeling, and to ask for a change in behavior. The students were successful in writing I-messages. Emma wrote, "I feel upset when you break promises. I want you to stop". Heather not only successfully wrote an I-message, she also gave an example of using one outside of class. She wrote,

> I feel lonely when you leave me out. Will you please let me in? When you make jokes that you think are funny, but to me they are not, they make me feel unwanted and you make me feel like trash! I want you to please stop! Today, S---- said I was ugly and my new dress was really ugly so I said you know what S----- I feel unwanted when you are mean to me and I want you to stop please and then she stopped!

Heather gave several examples of an I-message. She ended her statement with a smiley face, indicating her satisfaction in the result.

After learning the 6-step integrative negotiation process, students were to use I-messages, rephrasing, and the process to negotiate a win-win solution to a conflict of their choice. Heather, Maggie, Abby, and Pam created a skit about Abby having a sleepover with Heather and Pam but not inviting Maggie. Maggie expressed hurt feelings and Abby let her know that she was only allowed to have two girls over to spend the night.

> Maggie: I feel sad when you guys through my book on the floor and say I can't be invited to the party.
>
> Abby: Well we feel sad because we were mean to you and you didn't like it. So we want to solve the problem. The problem is you want to be invited to the party but I can only have two people over. And we want to solve it. And so what do you want?

This was a good example of a negotiable conflict. The conflict was defined by a shortage of resources, a common desire to maintain a relationship, and more than one possible satisfactory solution. The girls decided to have Maggie spend time with them but sleep at her own house this time.

Peter, Wes, and Paul performed a skit that paralleled an actual conflict they experienced. When attempting to create a skit during visit 12, Peter and Paul had different ideas about what they would do than Wes. Wes was conscious that the other boys' ideas were silly and off topic. He became frustrated and wanted to leave the group. I intervened and encouraged him to use the skills we were practicing to solve the problem. The boys had to be coached more than once through this process. Wes left his group because Peter would not listen. I told him to use the method. He said he was trying. I asked him to try again but Wes's face turned red, and tears came in his eyes so I stepped in. I let Peter describe his idea. He said he would be doing push-ups and then Paul would come and sit on him. Then Wes would step in and ask how he felt. I

interrupted and asked “Well, what's the negotiation?” He said, “I want to do push-ups and Paul needs some place to sit” He was laughing. I said, “Is that really something you can negotiate?” And he sheepishly said no. I sent them back to work. Even after this conversation I had to intervene one more time to encourage Peter and Paul to listen to Wes. At one point, I asked them to notice Wes’s reaction and if they thought they were filling or emptying his bucket. They recognized that they were emptying it but when I asked what they could do to fill it, they could not answer. I asked Wes how they could fill it. He said that working on the skit would fill his bucket. I asked Peter if he could do that and he said he could. After this interaction, the boys were able to create their skit. This interaction was an example of students knowing what to do but needing support to see the process through.

Skepticism expressed. At the end of the unit, I asked students to write a reflection about these skills and processes. Four students specifically expressed skepticism that these skills could work in their daily lives. Peter wrote, “I think that plays are fun, but it’s kind of hard doing the I-message”. Heather wrote,

> I think that it is good but hard to do for me at least because I don’t like to be the one to apologize and I don’t like admitting that I was wrong or stuff like that so I kinda…well, I guess I don’t really know what I think of it. All I know is, I think it is hard!”

And a student who did not put a name on the paper wrote, “I think it’s a good idea, but I don’t. Because if you try to say it (I-message) to someone they might start laughing and tell everybody. Then you will feel embarrassed”. These statements represented a struggle to imagine an outcome that was different than what they were accustomed. It is difficult to hope that being vulnerable by sharing feelings and asking for what is wanted will actually result in a positive outcome.

An insight from Mrs. F sheds more light on this dilemma for students, "… if one teacher sees a disagreement and they don't help them work it out or know the steps, it might be a little more stressful to kids to work it out on their own" (Final Teacher Interview). It was difficult for students to be vulnerable and use I-messages when they were unsure of the support they may receive from adults. A situation involving Sue at recess illustrated this problem clearly. During week 8, while I was observing recess, Sue came over and sat by herself against the wall. I walked over to her and asked her what was wrong. Another girl joined her. Sue was crying. She said that a girl in the other class was leaving her out and running away from her. I asked her if she had used an I-message and she said no. She said that the other girl would not listen, that she would just put her fingers in her ears and say, "la la la." Sue said that she was afraid to try because if the girl did this Sue would become extremely angry. I offered to go with her to talk to the girl, but she declined. The other girl and she started talking about something else so I moved away. As I was walking in from recess, Sue's friend suggested that Sue had tried to confront the girl later during recess so I waited for her. When I saw Sue I asked how it went. She was angry but energized. She had used an I-message, but the girl had not listened. I affirmed her for trying and she smiled at me. Sue's story demonstrated the anxiety about the vulnerability these skills require. She was reluctant to try. But the story also demonstrated that possibly using these skills, even when one does not get the desired result, had benefits. Sue seemed energized, even if she was angry, rather than sad and helpless as she had been before.

The lessons taught established a new orientation to relationships and finding solutions. To use a metaphor, I turned the map upside down and established a new north. Intervening in Wes's group was an example of needing to continue to remind students of this recalibration.

They were not ready to read the map independently. Being vulnerable is difficult and students need support as they attempt to approach conflicts in new ways.

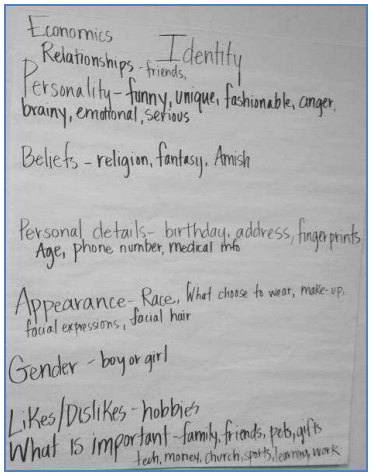
Inquiry 3: The Development of Change Processes

The third inquiry is defined by the episode and the epicenter of a sphere surrounded by factors that affect how the center will change and develop. Surrounding the episode and the epicenter nucleus, are personal, cultural, relational, and structural factors. As the nucleus is acted upon by the presenting situation and the hope for the future, these other factors impact the episode/epicenter nucleus (Lederach, 2003).

The lessons focusing on inquiry 3 related mainly to personal and relational factors. Elementary students typically have little input on structural and cultural factors that impact their lives. They usually do not have a say in the way schools or homes are systematized. Lessons that were meant to address inquiry 3 were Lesson 4 "Identity" and Lessons 6 and 7, "Feelings." All three lessons related to personal and relational factors. Students enjoyed creating a piece of art that represented their identity. They made connections between the aspects of their personalities and their approach to conflict. They also seemed to enjoy keeping the feeling journal, at least during class. Some of them kept the journal throughout the week as requested while others often forgot. They caught on quickly to how an I-message works and applied them to positive situations much more quickly and easily than hurtful situations. They particularly enjoyed writing bucket notes and went out of their way to make sure everyone received one.

Student experience. Students identified several factors in relationship to the concept of identity during Lesson 4.

Figure 4.8. Identity Factors. This poster represented the ideas collected from students about identity through a brainstorming session during visit 4.



After determining the categories of identity, they were asked to write statements about themselves in relationship to these categories. Then they were given a copy of their fingerprint, tracing paper and markers and asked to write those identity statements on the tracing paper as they followed the lines of their fingerprint. The fingerprints below are representative of their thoughts about themselves

Figure 4.9. Wes's Identity Fingerprint.

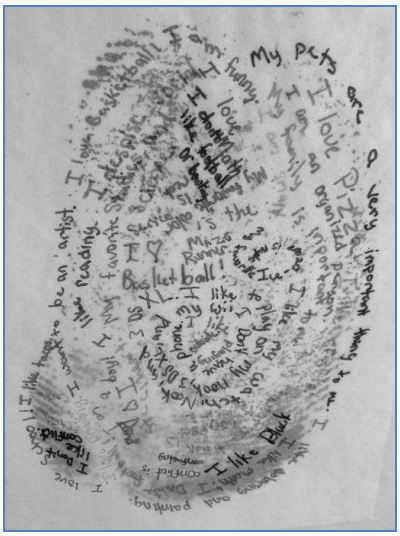
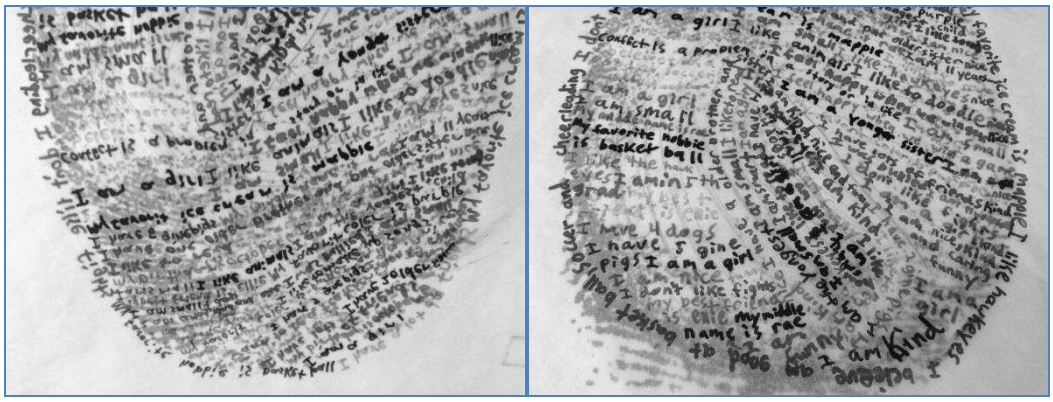


Figure 4.10. Kim's Identity Fingerprint.



During the class discussion, I pointed out that a person's identity will have an impact on how they address conflict. Wes's statements that he finds conflict "weird" and "confusing" and that he does not like it probably contributed to his response to Peter and Paul described above. It was particularly frustrating for Wes when he perceived that the other boys were not meeting the requirements of the assignment because he sees himself as "organized".

Abby's fingerprint included the following statements.

Conflict is hard sometimes.

I can be serious about something important to me.

I have lots of friends.

I'm happy when I play sports.

I believe money isn't everything.

Church is important to me.

I love my family.

In conflict I try to solve the problem.

I am the oldest.

I am the oldest grandchild.

I believe church is important.

I'm in youth group.

Getting a good job is important to me.

I try to get good grades.

I am brave.

My personality is unique.

The importance of identity in one's approach to conflict was reinforced during the second focus group. Abby stated,

> I guess it just depends on the person you are. If you're one of those people that are just like I'm going to go in and I'm going to win because that's just who I am, I'm just going to win….and then there's the other people who are like, I really want to be friends with you, let's solve it so we can be friends again.

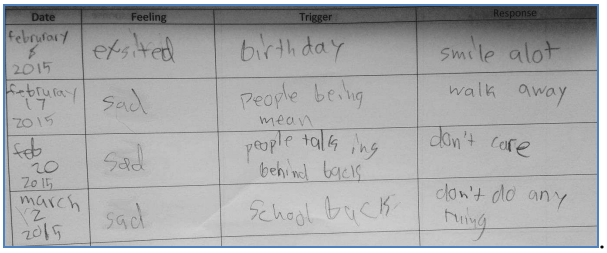
Abby's fingerprint statement that she likes to solve problems gave credence to her statement that if someone is a problem solver they will approach conflict differently than someone who wants to win. She recognized a difference in outcome goals for the conflict. Some people value winning, while others value maintaining the relationship. What a person values will determine her approach to negotiation. This insight was supported in the literature (Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Cotton, et al., 1995).

Identity is central to the episode and the epicenter. Kim's assertion that she does not like fights, but she has a lot of friends; that she was bullied; that conflict is a problem; and that she is nice all contribute to how she handles conflict. During my second visit, I observed Kim avoiding some other girls. This may have been connected to an issue that arose during the first visit when she was accused of calling them "dumb". I observed Kim playing by herself and refusing to interact with the girls as they followed her. According to Lederach (2003), personal factors

impact the episode/epicenter of the conflict. This particular episode for Kim was shaped by the context of her relationships and past experiences with the other girls, and the context shaped her response.

Lessons 6 and 7 helped students name and identify feelings. These lessons culminated in the feelings journals students kept over a time period of several weeks. Students identified a feeling, its trigger, and the normal response. At the end of the unit, students reflected on the pattern of their responses.

Figure 4.11. Caleb's Feelings Journal.



Date	Feeling	Trigger	Response
february 5 2015	exsited	birthday	smile alot
february 17 2015	sad	people being mean	walk away
feb 20 2015	sad	people talking behind backs	don't care
march 12 2015	sad	school back	don't do any thing

Caleb reflected that his most common feeling was sad, that it was triggered by people being mean and that he most often dealt with it by walking away. His conclusions were supported by his identity fingerprint.

Figure 4.12. Caleb's Identity Fingerprint.

Caleb's fingerprint stated that "conflict is scary" he was serious and he liked to win. Deciding to walk away from conflict was consistent with believing conflict to be scary.

Identifying feelings and using that knowledge to create I-messages built strong relationships, changing the shape of the episode/epicenter. In a thank you note to me Caleb wrote, "This thing that you have been teaching us is kinda working. I am having people being nice to me". Kim, whose feelings journal identified two instances of being sad and frustrated with her sister and mother respectively because they were yelling at her or not listening to her wrote, "thank you for teaching me to talk to my family about my feelings". By identifying how one's identity shaped the way one approached conflict, by learning to identify feelings and share those feelings in a vulnerable way, students learned how to change the way they experienced conflict in the present moment. Each episode that was changed created transformation in the deeper context of the epicenter.

Structural factors. The other two factors that shaped the episode and the epicenter, as presenting situation and the imagined future act upon it, were structural and cultural. Elementary students have less control over the structures of a school. The change in the seating arrangement during lunch was a good example. During the first focus group, students discussed the conflict that led to the enforced seating arrangement. Prior to the seating arrangement, they saw lunch time as an important time to talk to their friends. This special talk time was taken from them when their talking turned to gossiping. Parents and the administrator became involved. Heather's pro/con list discussed earlier, regarding this incident stated, "you could talk about the problem and try to work it out". The students' discussion about their loss of needed talk time supported Heather's assertion that intervention, while it solved the problem, also disempowered the

students. The structure of the school is such that adults make the major decisions about how students will move through their day.

One of the ways adults set the structure for each day is through the schedule. Mrs. F shared how important the schedule is to the operation of the day. She stated, "If I can keep them on schedule and make it a very normal day, then it seems like things go pretty smoothly". Schedules help to regulate the day for students. When students had a schedule they knew what to expect and it reduced anxiety that might lead to conflicts. Schedules can also make it difficult to address conflicts that arise. "…sometimes it is hard for them to come inside after a conflict at recess and shake it off and go on to the next thing" (Mrs. F, Teacher Interview 1).

A structural factor that seemed to impact student response to conflict was the identity of the adult supervising them. Mrs. F shared that at one time, the teachers had lunchroom duty and the associates had recess duty. This did not work well because the students were perceived to have less respect for associates and there were more problems at recess. Now the roles are reversed and the teachers have recess duty. Students seemed to stratify adults in the schools according to perceived authority, perceiving teachers to have more authority than associates. When they were with adults they respect or to whom they listen, conflicts were diminished.

Mrs. F. also pointed out that the guidance person had been cut due to budget demands and the High School person had been coming to teach lessons. These lessons were not as relevant to elementary students as they might be to older students. Funding is a structural issue that directly impacted the nature and amount of support offered to children.

Cultural factors. The fourth factor that impacted the episode/epicenter in inquiry 3 is cultural. Four aspects of culture arose during the study. One related directly to the point above about perceived authority. "Sometimes they (students) don't respect women teachers or… you

kind of tend to push the kids that need a father figure into that classroom to try to contain maybe possible conflicts" (Mrs. F., Final Teacher Interview). The perception that male teachers would be a better teacher fit for students who lack a male influence in their life is a cultural perception and impacts the shape of the episode/epicenter of conflict.

Another cultural factor impacting the shape of the conflict was increased usage of social media (Street, NW, Washington, & Inquiries, n.d.). According to Mrs. F, parents talk to each other over social media even before they inform her of a problem. This outside use of social media directly impacted student interaction in the classroom. Mrs. F. stated, "…Snapchatting has been a problem this year where so and so will tell so and so that someone was saying something about you…and there is no proof and it just disappears" She expressed a concern that conflicts that occur outside school still impact students at school.. "… but I'm sure it's stress that they have when they are in the classroom with those people that they know have said things about them and made them feel bad" (Teacher Interview 1).

The concern that the conflicts students encountered in and out of school impacted student experience in school was real. In the second focus group Abby discussed how being involved in conflicts caused worry and distracted her from her schoolwork. She worried about her friends being mad at her and she spent time and energy trying to figure out a solution.

> So ya, if you're so worried about it, you get wrapped up and that's all you can think about because you want to make sure that your friends are not mad at you or whatever… and you want to still be friends and you're trying to figure a way to solve it, but you're not focusing and it most likely is going to affect .. stuff like that.

Outside influences, such as social media, increased the opportunities for social interaction with negative consequences.

A third cultural factor influencing the episode/epicenter of conflict was the increased awareness of bullying, characterized by a government website and a month dedicated to its prevention (Affairs, 2013). Although parents and teachers are more aware of bullying, they were not always able to distinguish it from other relationship issues. According to Beane (2011) there are four criteria to the definition of bullying: "the mistreatment is intentional; the mistreatment is hurtful; the mistreatment occurs more than once; and there is an imbalance of power. The target has difficulty defending himself or herself" (p. 4). When parents complained that their child was being bullied they did not always consider all of these criteria.

> And now parents are just like 'well my child is getting bullied'. Well, that isn't what that is and they don't know how to address the conflict, they just want to say it's bullying and they want someone to be in trouble for it (Mrs. F. Teacher Interview 1).

Because of the increased awareness of bullying and the increased coverage in the media about school administrators and teachers who did not address bullying appropriately, an accusation of bullying carries more weight than it previously did. This impacted the episode and the epicenter of the conflict.

A fourth and final cultural factor that emerged from the study was the impact of socioeconomics on the approach to conflict. According to Mrs. F, there seemed to be some connection between socioeconomic status and level of parental support. There may be many reasons why parents of a lower socioeconomic status may not support their children's education in the same way as parents with more economic means (Shanks & Robinson, 2013). Regardless, of the reason, the reduced level of support impacted students' experience with conflict. Students coming from a lower economic class have fewer supports for addressing conflict appropriately, according to Mrs. F.

Themes

In addition to using the data to illuminate experience with Lederach's (2003) conflict transformation framework, four themes emerged. These themes, outlined in table 4.2, were literacy and relationship skills were strengthened, student understanding of conflict increased, students were ambivalent about adult arbitration, and students felt vulnerable when resolving conflict.

Table 4.2

Summary of Findings. This table outlines the themes, results, and supporting data for the study.

Theme	Results	Data
Literacy and relationship skills were strengthened	Students used tools from CT lessons in their Reading curriculum and vice versa.	Adam's Pro/Con List Table 4.3; Teacher interview – lit & escalator
	Extended time benefited application	Teacher interview – over time
	Students applied CT tools to topics that were more personal to them	observation – visit 10
	Careful not to lose the curriculum objectives	observation – visit 11
Student understanding of conflict increased	Definitions expanded and increased in complexity	Conflict webs vs. escalators
	Increase in Emotional Literacy	observation regarding bucket notes Visit 10 observation – Visit 11 Teacher interview – more aware of each other Molly & Abby quotes from focus group 2 Adam's Thank you note Molly's thank you note
Students were ambivalent a about adult arbitration	Arbitration stops conflict	observation visit 5
	Students know there will be a fair outcome	Focus group 2 – Abby, Molly; observation visit 12
	Students feel disempowered	Focus group 1 – Wes, Brett, Maggie, Molly; Focus group 2 – Wes, Brett
	Teachers approach it differently	Teacher interview
	Sometimes mutually satisfying, sometimes not	observation visit 12,10
	Not integrative because student voice not heard	Focus group quotes

Table 4.2 cont.

Summary of Findings. This table outlines the themes, results and supporting data for the study.

Theme	Results	Data
Students felt vulnerable when resolving conflict	Afraid of peer response	observation visit 6, 12 (sue) Student written reflections

Themes were developed by reading through the focus group and teacher interview transcripts, finding common words and concepts to develop codes, and then using those codes to codify the transcripts. The codes were then used to analyze the physical artifacts. The codes that related directly to the type of conflict and type of response were taken from the coding system based on Deutsch's work already in place at the beginning of the study (Deutsch, 1977). These themes related to the existing literature about non-violent conflict intervention programs with children and helped to clarify student experience with the conflict transformation framework.

After evidence was uploaded into Dedoose (Dedoose, 2014), I coded the material with 28 codes. These main codes were change, conflict, curriculum integration, emotional literacy, awareness, improved relationships, personal, solutions, and structures. Conflict had four sub codes. These were resources, relationships, preferences, and values. Additionally, relationships had four sub codes. These were trust, revenge, power, and communication. Curriculum integration had one sub-code, academic achievement. Awareness had three sub codes. These were reflective/critical thinking, skepticism/reluctance, and development. Solutions had five sub codes. These were avoidance, arbitration, apologize, distributive, and integrative. And structures had two sub codes. These were home and school. After coding, the computer program created a Code Co-Occurence chart (Dedoose, 2014) which highlighted the number of times a code pair was used in the same excerpt and resource.

1. Literacy and Relationship Skills Were Strengthened

The theme, literacy and relationship skills were strengthened, emerged from several findings. These findings were that students used the tools from the conflict transformation lessons as they worked in their reading curriculum and they used the tools from the reading curriculum to understand conflict transformation. It was evident that the extended time with these tools improved the students' ability to apply them. Students were able to apply the tools to topics that were more personal to them. Additionally, it is important for a teacher to guard against compromising one set of objectives for the sake of another. These findings were made evident through pro/con lists, teacher interviews, and observation.

The data from this study supported the conclusion that curriculum integration improves curricular mastery as well as non-violent conflict intervention skill application. The co-occurrence chart showed that curriculum integration occurred in the same piece of evidence as reflective/critical thinking 12 times. The piece of evidence that highlighted the connection between curriculum integration and student thinking was the Pro/Con list.

Table 4.3

Adam's Pro/Con list. This list illustrates Adam's position on more recess

Topic: There should be more recess	
Pro	Con
• We could get more time to interact with different kids. • Have recess will let your energy out so you can focus • You should get some time to get your mind off work and have some fun.	• We would get less time to do work. • Sometimes kids don't like going outside when it either really hot or really cold • You could have disagreements that cut into your time doing school work

Students were able to use this tool from the curriculum to identify the differing viewpoints of a particular issue. They showed awareness that the undesired perspective had merit. Adam's list,

shown in table 4.3, regarding a topic for which he obviously supported, included some thoughtful reasons why more recess might not be something everyone wanted.
This perspective taking was important to the conflict transformation process (Lederach, 2003).

Wes could also see both sides of lunchroom seating arrangement issue. His stated pros for choosing one's own seat were, "New friends, sit by new people, and you can choose where you want to sit (end, middle)". His stated cons were, "They could talk, all the seats by your friend might be filled, conflict with the people around you". Wes recognized that having choice was a good thing but there was possibility for conflict. Helping students identify the value in a perspective opposite their own, builds empathy and encourages negotiation.

Because of the literature regarding integration of conflict resolutions skills into the regular classroom curriculum (Stevahn et al., 2002; Stevahn et al., 2000; Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003), I worked closely with Mrs. F to integrate my lessons with the curriculum she already planned to teach. At our first meeting, we decided to integrate the conflict resolution lessons with language arts. This was a good fit because there was already a social-emotional learning component embedded in the curriculum, though she said she did not focus on it as much as the reading. The two comprehension strategies she would be teaching when our unit began were inference and character change. I thought analyzing how characters change in stories had great possibility for exploring conflict. I assured her that if anything did not work right or balance out, if she felt like she was losing too much instructional time, to just tell me and I would adapt. She was very supportive and assured me she was excited about the project. She was not worried about losing instructional time. Between our first and second meeting prior to the beginning of the unit, I sent her some lesson descriptions based on my review of her curriculum. She seemed pleased with how the lessons were fitting into the curriculum. We began the unit

with the understanding that I would teach the lesson assigned to a particular day, picking up where she left off the previous lesson. She would continue where I left off with the next lesson. By the eighth visit, it became apparent that she was the teaching the lesson that I was assigned before I came. “She said that it was because we just didn't approach it the same way. She liked what I was doing, but she felt that she was better able to hit the things she wanted to also this way” (Field Notes, Visit 8). I still connected the conflict transformation lessons back to the lesson in the curriculum but this way she felt she was addressing the reading needs of her students better. She continued to assure me she did not feel she was losing important instructional time.

One benefit to curriculum integration is the fact that lessons were taught over time. This gave students time to think about a topic, practice a skill and then review later, which is important to building understanding. Mrs. F. stated, “You give them a little and then they practice applying it in their life and school and whatever they are doing and then they learn a little more. I like that part of it so that it builds”. The repetition and connection to other lessons help students to internalize the concepts and skills.

Concepts refer to the knowledge students develop as they come to understand the definition and nature of conflict. Other related conflict intervention concepts are the name and definition of emotion, what an emotional trigger is, the structure of an I-message, and the reason why building appreciation for one another impacts the outcome of a conflict. Some concepts related to the classroom reading curriculum I addressed were, what a perspective is, how it is communicated, and the purpose of functional text. The mastery of these concepts was assessed through class discussion.

Skills refer to the actual actions a student takes to apply the concepts they have learned. An example of a skill related to conflict intervention is using an I-message to express a feeling and a desired outcome. An example of a skill related to the classroom reading curriculum is identifying the opposing perspectives in a text. These skills were assessed through the completion of graphic organizers, written messages, performed skits, and daily observation.

Mrs. F discussed particular aspects of the lessons she felt were easily integrated into her classroom. One of these included books that I read aloud and discussed in class. Mrs. F. stated, "I feel like they relate to that idea. They remember the book. They remember the feeling they had when they read it…I can see them saying like 'just like Maya' or 'just like…' and they'll name a character". Another lesson that was easily integrated was the conflict escalator I used to discuss cause and effect. Mrs. F. referred specifically to times she returned to this tool to reinforce cause and effect in other contexts. "I feel like any time you have a program, kind of like you have, if it can be cross-curricular, it's like you could just be hitting it all day long. I think it is highly effective" (Teacher Interview 1). Additionally, Mrs. F discussed the possibilities the Feelings Journal offered for writing activities.

During visit 10, I experienced a time when trying to integrate the negotiation process using the curriculum materials did not work as well. I wanted students to use functional text to negotiate an outcome. The text provided by the curriculum was a flier for an amusement park. I divided students into groups and asked them to think of themselves as a family unit. They had to negotiate which ticket offer they would purchase. Then they had to negotiate with another "family" which offer would work for the combined group. This was difficult for students. They struggled to find a feeling word during the negotiation. They had a much easier time using the process when they were considering a conflict based in reality.

There was also a moment during visit 11 when I was unsure that the lesson I was teaching addressed the content of the curriculum adequately. When working through the negotiation regarding land disputes with the Native Americans, the solution they chose was about sharing land. Historically the Native Americans were willing to share land. That was the purpose of the treaties. The conflict really was that the European Americans would not honor their contracts. This is a conflict that really cannot be negotiated because one party isn't following the agreement already reached. Students re-negotiated agreements in which the European American and the Native Americans would share the land. While this process assisted students in considering both sides of the issue, it did not address the injustice visited on the Native Americans when European Americans broke their treaties.

Overall, students were able to use the tools and ideas of the curriculum to analyze conflict. They were able to apply some of the tools and skills I used to analyze conflict to the skills being taught in their curriculum. The cross-over supported the development of both skill sets. However, integration needs to be thoughtful so that the curricular concerns of the classroom are not sacrificed for the conflict intervention processes.

2. Student Understanding of Conflict Increased

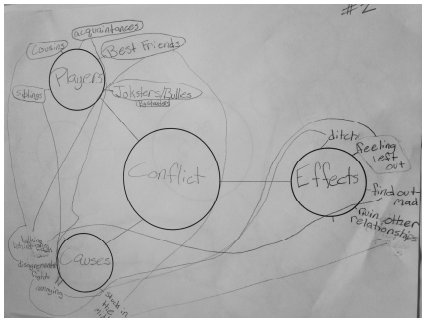
The second theme, student understanding of conflict increased, emerged from the following findings. Student definitions of conflict expanded and increased in complexity Comparing conflict webs with conflict escalators assisted in reaching this conclusion. A second finding was the noticeable increase in emotional literacy, made clear through observation, teacher interviews, focus groups, and thank you notes.

The Dedoose (2014) co-occurrence chart showed the themes change and conflict occurred in 44 of the same excerpts, change and relationships in 37 of the same excerpts and

change and emotional literacy in 38 of the same excerpts. The students, Mrs. F, and myself all expressed recognition of changes that occurred over the course of the unit. These changes were not drastic, but they were beneficial.

The excerpts that were coded both change and conflict came mainly from the written I-messages and the conflict webs. Students were able to clearly articulate a new way to approach conflict and demonstrate the complexity of conflicts. At the beginning of the unit, students had a vague understanding of conflict and how it worked. The conflict escalator graphic organizers were largely incomplete. While students could follow the concept during the class discussion being led by me, only two student groups indicated feelings on the lower levels of their escalator. Over half of the escalators, when completed without my help, did not correctly identify the escalation of conflict before the conflict event occurred. By the next visit, however, students were able to clearly identify connections between the players, causes, and effects in a conflict as shown in figure 4.13.

Figure 4.13 Conflict Web #2



This is growth: from not being able to name the events leading up to a conflict to identifying causes and effects of a conflict and the people who are involved.

The excerpts relating to change and relationships came mostly from the written I-messages. Students were able to approach their relationships in new ways. This was also evident through the usage of bucket notes. My field notes from visit 10 indicated a noticeable difference

in relationships in the classroom. At the beginning of the lesson, I asked for examples of times they had used an I-message or filled someone's bucket. My notes stated, "More thoughtful since I've come - more bucket filling; Less drama – using I-messages; Lots of examples of using I-messages and bucket filling at home; Ex of using I-messages to say positive things".

The excerpts related to change and emotional literacy came from thank you notes, written I-messages and conflict webs. Molly's thank you note to me stated,

> When we were talking the other day about saying I-messages to their face and I said could we do them like a bucket note, you said to say it to their face. I did, it solved the problem. I've used everything that you have taught. Thanks for helping me solve my problems!

Molly struggled at times to use I-messages and state her feelings. This note was evidence that change occurred.

Students wrote I-message on topics that were important to them. This was good practice for when they may need to use the skill in the future.

> Jenny: I feel MAD! When people talk about me behind my back. I want them to stop talking about me behind my back.
>
> Wes: I feel inadequate when you leave me out. I want you to include me.
>
> Abby: I feel upset when you fight with my friends. I want you to stop! It's not a big deal!
>
> Andy: I feel angry when you leave me out I just want to play again. When you play jokes and they are not funny it makes me mad so don't do it any more please. I feel shy because I got glasses and I'm scared that someone will judge me.
>
> Ron: I feel anxious when you keep secrets. I want you to trust me to keep that secret

These I-messages provided insight into the worries and struggles students experience. Students when asked to name conflicts they experienced, talked about gossip and having jokes played on them. Worry about being judged or trusted however, emerged later, in the context of asking them what they want from others. This new structure changed the way they expressed their needs and wants.

Another change described by students, observed by me, and expressed by Mrs. F. related to an increased awareness. In the first teacher interview Mrs. F stated,

> They are maybe becoming more aware of the things they say and maybe wanting to make their classmates feel good about themselves or, you know, whatever the situation might be, maybe feel better about it. I don't know if I've seen a big change in them.

She further expressed that though the change did not seem large, she did see them thinking about the concepts and skills as time went on.

During visit 10, I noted that students were talking regularly when prompted about using I-messages and filling buckets. Though the experience with the unit did not change the students or the classroom dramatically, a change did occur.

> Mrs. F shared that she did feel like things were getting better but then still things like this happen. She hopes that just being exposed to the ideas and having heard the ideas will have an impact in the future (Field Notes, Visit 11).

At the final teacher interview Mrs. F. stated, “I feel like they are a lot more aware of their interactions with other kids and adults. I feel like they have used the strategies that you have given them and they are using the language” And during the second focus group, Abby and Molly talked about not only hearing her own classmates using I-messages and the ABCD

process, she could see evidence that the other class was being exposed to the concepts and skills as well.

> Molly: Really, well two of them (conflicts). The first one was about telling secrets to other people. And then I heard, I think it was in the other class too, girls were fighting about – I can't even remember what they were fighting about, but since I've told one of them what you have been doing and everything, they used an "I" message and it was all okay.
>
> Abby: I told you it was going to spread. I knew it was happening.

Despite this general sense that things were getting better, during Visit 12 when I asked students to choose their own groups, Emma, Sue, Fiona, and Jenny formed a group because they were the only ones without a group. This repeated the social structure from the beginning of the unit. Still, Adam wrote the following in his Thank you note to me, expressing clearly a change he had experience over the course of the unit.

> You have taught us how to respect, care and be nice. You have taught us conflict and how to solve it. You have taught us bucket notes and I-messages. P.S. You have made our class and school the best it can be.

3. Students Were Ambivalent About Adult Arbitration

The third theme, students were ambivalent about adult arbitration, emerged in consideration of the following findings. Arbitration stops conflict and students trust there will be a fair outcome when the conflict is arbitrated by an adult. However, students also feel disempowered when arbitration occurs. Teachers approach arbitration differently and sometimes a mutually satisfied solution is reached, while other times not. Regardless of whether the solution is mutually satisfying, arbitration is not an integrative process because students' voices are not

heard. These findings were supported with evidence from teacher interviews, observation, and focus groups.

Over the course of the unit, there were examples of both teachers and me arbitrating conflicts. On my first visit, Mrs. F. told me about one such conflict. Sue, Jenny, and a girl from another class reported to her that Kim was calling them stupid and dumb. They knew this because Fiona told them. Mrs. F told me she told them that if they only knew about it third hand then they didn't really know and they should 'go about their business.' She shared that she tried to intervene in conflicts in ways that help students build empathy. She stated, "I usually try to point out to them like, well I wouldn't appreciate that if that were me if someone said that to me. I will try to give them an example of something that has happened to me".

I witnessed a conflict arbitrated by a lunchroom associate during visit 5. There was something going on between Molly, Fiona, Peter, and Caleb in which something was being said that caused a dramatic reaction from Molly. Her eyes got big and her mouth hung open. She covered her mouth with her hand, gasping like she was surprised. It was escalating and then a school associate pulled Molly, Peter, and Caleb out in the hallway. Caleb was the first to return. Fiona asked him what happened. He did not answer. Then Peter and Molly came in. Fiona asked Molly, but Molly ignored her and turned her back to her.

Through a conversation at recess with Peter and Molly, it became clear that Molly's reaction described above had to do with saying inappropriate things and discussing the fact that Caleb did not understand what was being said. The lunchroom associate stopped the conflict before it escalated very far. Fiona's desire to know what happened is an example of how the conflict would have escalated further before the lunchroom seating arrangement consequence was imposed. Molly's refusal to allow further escalation to happen demonstrated that the

consequence curbed the unwanted behavior. In this case, arbitration stopped a conflict before it escalated too far. When asked about teacher arbitration during the first focus group, students had thought of it as less than ideal.

> Wes: Everybody gets in trouble and nobody gets their way.
>
> Brett: If a teacher stops it, it is never really over because you will just go back and start fighting more. If you stop it, it helps you because you can do it and it helps you because you're the one doing it and they stop.
>
> Abby: If the teacher stops it, you just secretly, behind the teacher's back, you still kind of talk about it. When you stop it, it's just like it's done and over with.
>
> Brett: When the teacher stops it, you're still mad and depressed because it didn't stop yet.
>
> Maggie: When you solve it yourself, it feels good. When a teacher gets involved in it, it does not feel very good.
>
> Molly: When you stop it, it feels good, but when a teacher stops it, sometimes you feel like you're still going to get revenge for it and you're still going to hurt them in some kind of way. And you feel like you're going to get in more trouble, like if your parents find out.

However, during the second focus group students acknowledged that the need for teacher arbitration was not always clear.

> Abby: I bet if it was a kid is trying to solve it, I would imagine that it's still going to go on because a lot of the 6th graders don't really care what 5th graders say, because they think that they're older than them and they don't think that they can tell them what to do.
>
> Margo: So if you would have tried this, you don't think that would have worked?

Abby: Well, it kind of depends on who it is. Like, if it is a really good friend to the 6th graders or some of the 6th graders, it might have worked. But if it was a person they didn't even know it wouldn't have worked. If it was the teacher, they can tell them how to work it.

Molly: It's kind of harder to negotiate with the 6th graders than it is the 5th graders.

Margo: People who are equal to you, it is easier.

Wes: Well, when the teacher steps in you kind of feel like you can't solve it by yourself because they have to step in. So people can't … it kind of feels like people can't solve it by themselves.

Margo: Do you think people can solve it by themselves?

Group: Yes.

Brett: Working together is the whole process.

At the beginning of this excerpt, the girls seemed to be in favor of arbitration, especially when there was an imbalance of power. However, by the end all the students were saying they would prefer to solve problems themselves.

Each adult approached arbitration differently, possibly contributing to the students' ambiguous response to it. When asked during the second focus group for an example of a conflict that ended in a win-win solution, the students described one that had been arbitrated by a teacher picking teams when the teams become inequitable. Students felt that the unfair picking of teams did not happen when the teacher divided the students. Though the students felt better about the outcome when the teacher arbitrated the conflict about teams, I noticed students had to stop the game to ask who was on which team periodically. They had a hard time remembering how the teams had been divided (Field Notes, Visit 12).

The code co-occurrence chart (Dedoose, 2014) identified 14 matching excerpts for arbitration and distributive. It is clear from this data that arbitration can result in outcomes that only please one individual in the conflict as well as mutually satisfying outcomes. However, these cannot be considered integrative solutions because, in arbitration, the students are disempowered, and therefore, there is still a loss or win-lose situation. There were several instances of minor conflicts that were arbitrated and did not necessarily end with both parties satisfied. One such conflict occurred during visit 12. It happened during a class activity in which a group of four was suddenly down to a group of two because two students had to leave the room for another activity.

> Jenny and Sue had to go. Fiona and Emma said they can't work with two people. Emma kept looking at Maddy's group. I said to do it with two people. Emma said they can't do their play with two people. I said pick something else then.

Another was at lunch during visit 10. Emma tattled, saying that Fiona took her cards. I asked her if she used an I-message. She smiled and returned to her seat. I walked over a minute later. She had still not used an I-message, but the cards were in front of her. There was disagreement around her about who took them. Fiona was smiling and so was Ron, although Emma was not. In both situations, the students were not happy with the outcome. In the first, I arbitrated by giving them a solution. In the second, I intervened by encouraging them to use an I-message. The conflict was partially solved when Emma's cards were returned. However, she did not display satisfaction, meaning that the issue was more likely something else that had not been resolved, possibly just the act of having something taken from her. The most significant example of an arbitrated distributive resolution to a conflict was the lunchroom seating arrangement. The solution came from authority and the students were not satisfied with the outcome.

There were two main conflicts that ended in mutually satisfying solutions. The first was arbitrated. It was described in the second student focus group and related to teams at recess. The teacher on duty divided up the teams when they became imbalanced after the sixth-grade students went inside. During the focus group, students talked about why the teacher needed to step in and recognized the solution as more fair, regardless of their lack of opportunity to make the decision. Though this solution ended well for students, they did not come to the solution themselves. Despite positive outcomes, according to the students, something is lost in the process. As Wes stated, "Well, when the teacher steps in you kind of feel like you can't solve it by yourself because they have to step in so people can't … it kind of feels like people can't solve it by themselves".

The second conflict was solved through integrative negotiation with my intervention. Though, I intervened repeatedly, this process could be described as mediation instead of arbitration and so could be considered integrative. When Wes, Paul, and Peter struggled to work together, I would not allow Wes to leave the situation. I coached the boys through solving their problem, but I had to intervene several times. What could be viewed as arbitration occurred when I said "no" to Wes and coerced him back into the group.

Wes - What do you want?

Peter and Paul – That we can make a skit.

Wes – Why do you want to make a skit?

Peter – Me and Flea wanted to make a funny skit.

Wes – I feel mad because you guys are making it funny and I want to it to be a skit about negotiation.

Peter – We could a mix like we could put me and Flea's in yours and yours in me and Flea's.

Wes – Or we could one first and then the other one last.

Peter - I think we should do the mix. What do you think Flea?

Paul and Wes – Yeah.

In this situation, the students did create a positive outcome, admittedly with a high level of support.

4. Students Felt Vulnerable When Resolving Conflict

The final theme, students felt vulnerable when resolving conflict, emerged from the finding that students are afraid to use the conflict transformation skills outside the classroom out of concern about peer response. This student concern about rejection and embarrassment was clearly demonstrated in recess and classroom observations. It was further demonstrated in student written reflections.

Fifteen excerpts were coded both awareness and skepticism/reluctance. This finding was discussed in relation to Inquiry 2 of the conflict transformation framework. As individuals involved in conflict consider the hope for the future, they must believe that a new outcome is possible. Skepticism and reluctance are important themes to consider again because they emerged in many places across different data points.

Renee expressed a concern during visit 6 about being able to use I-messages. She said that people may not want to show 'sad' because they may be afraid of what others think. Molly and I had an interaction during visit 8 during which she expressed a similar concern. Molly asked if she could use an I-message on a bucket note. She wanted to say I feel sad. I responded saying, I think those are best said directly to the person. She was reluctant to say it to the person. I talked

about how talking about difficult feelings is best-done face to face. Writing it means you don't know how the person is reading it and they don't have the benefit of your facial expression. I referred to a previous lesson when we made facial expressions. I offered to go with her to share her I-message, but she declined. And during visit 9 Heather worried that I-messages may not work because the feelings are so strong. Many students expressed similar worries about being received in their reflections.

> (No Name): I think it's a good idea but I don't. Because if you try to say it (I-message) to someone they might start laughing and tell everybody. Then you will feel embarrassed.
>
> Heather: I think that it is good but hard to do for me at least because I don't like to be the one to apologize and I don't like admitting that I was wrong or stuff like that so I kinda...well I guess I don't really know what I think of it all I know is I think it is hard!
>
> Adam: It think it is hard but the more you practice at it the better you'll be at it. It is hard at 1st but could come in handy in the future.
>
> Peter: I think that plays are fun, but it's kind of hard doing the I-message.
>
> Brett: I don't think I'm going to be able to do it in a conflict because the I-message seems hard to do.
>
> (No Name 2): I think this is really hard. But once I get the hang of it, it should be easier! The hard thing is I try to stay out of fights so it doesn't get wrapped up in me. I have got in fights and chose sides, but I'm trying to stay focused on school work and important stuff like that. But it is so less chaotic if I'm not in it. But if I'm eve in one that is what I'll use!

The best example of student awareness of the true difficulty in applying the concepts and skills being taught was when Sue was being treated poorly during recess and she was afraid to confront

the aggressor during visit 12. Although, students shared other reflections about how they appreciated the lessons, they enjoyed the activities and they wanted me to keep coming, there was an underlying real worry about how they could be received by others.

Summary

I taught an 8 week, 12 lesson conflict transformation unit to a classroom of 20 fifth-grade students. I worked closely with one teacher to integrate the conflict transformation lessons into the teacher's current reading curriculum. Student response demonstrated an understanding of the different components of the conflict transformation framework, nature of conflict, an ability to use skills in a role play setting, and an understanding of the different factors that impact conflict. The teacher felt the integration was beneficial for reinforcing concepts in her curriculum as well as the concepts regarding conflict. The students were positive about the experience. There was sufficient evidence to demonstrate they enjoyed the unit. There was evidence of a desire to apply the concepts in their lives, but also a reluctance to do so, based on concern for how they might be received. Students expressed a desire to solve their own problems but also an appreciation for teacher arbitration.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS

Perspective of an Educator

My main research question was, "What are the experiences of fifth-grade students as they learn about conflict transformation?" My findings impact three important areas of educational leadership. These areas are the educator, the existing literature, and the researcher.

One of the ways I approached this study was as a teacher. I was a public school elementary school teacher for 12 years. During that time, I became very familiar with student conflict, conflicts with each other, conflicts with teachers, and conflicts with families. The trajectory I traveled in addressing those conflicts started with a very authoritarian approach and consistently moved toward a more empowerment approach. Coming into this study, I had a deep interest in exploring ways to continue to empower students in their personal growth and learning.

The most compelling conclusion to be drawn from this study about the experience of fifth-grade students is that even when equipped with the skills to solve conflict, children are stymied by their fear of being vulnerable. They look to teachers to make them feel safe. At the same time, they want to have a voice and do not like it when the power to solve their own problems is taken from them. This reveals the relationship between the efficacy of the conflict transformation framework in schools and the culture of the school.

This study made it clear that children have a difficult time imagining an alternative future, the very action needed for inquiry 2 of the conflict transformation framework. Each lesson was designed to build one of the five capacities outlined by Lederach (2003). These capacities were (a) presenting issues as a window; (b) integrating multiple time frames; (c) posing conflict as a dilemma to be solved; (d) viewing complexity as a friend; and (e) hearing

and engaging voices of identity. Lessons regarding perspective and negotiation related to the first three capacities. Lessons regarding cause and effect related to the fourth and lessons regarding identity related to the last capacity. Students were able to understand and engage these lessons, building these capacities. However, this did not prepare them to fully address inquiry 2 of Lederach's (2003) framework.

When first conceptualizing this study, I intended to do an assignment where I would ask students to write an alternative ending to a story. Although, we discussed different possible endings to some of the books I read aloud to the class, there was not time to integrate it into the classroom curriculum. This assignment might have provided more insight into the process of imagining a new future for students. Instead what became clear is the difficult part of teaching children conflict resolution is not in defining it, or understanding that it has context or analyzing it for its impact. The difficulty is in helping students believe that alternative outcomes are possible. Students know alternative outcomes are desirable. However, they do not believe they are possible without an authority figure present to impose these endings. The focus group discussion was clear about this. Students wanted to make their own decisions but were relieved when the teachers were there to make sure the outcomes were fair. This was also made clear in the student-written reflections.

Another possibility for strengthening the unit might have been to draw a clearer line between the fear of another's response and the goal for the solution. Our enculturated desire to win in a conflict could be connected to our desire to protect ourselves and undermine our ability to be vulnerable. If students were less concerned with winning, possibly they would not be afraid of losing. The difficulty emerges due to the lack of vulnerability modeled for them as a

successful strategy. There are few messages in society that demonstrate vulnerability as a successful way to solve problems.

A secondary, more specific question was posed as well during this study. Are students more empowered and resolutions longer lasting when non-violent conflict intervention processes based on the conflict transformation framework are used independently of teacher arbitration to solve conflicts? This was not fully answered. There were no resolutions to observed conflicts that were negotiated independently of teacher arbitration that could be tracked. Eight weeks was not long enough to determine solution longevity.

"…[C]onflict situations can be particularly exacting as they require using problem-solving skills, communication skills, assertiveness skills and emotional regulation skills concurrently" (Borbely et al., 2005, p. 282). This is true. Students needed support as they were learning to incorporate all of those skills. That support was provided through worksheets that walked them through the process, practice, and coaching. What kept students from implementing these skills fully into their daily lives was the fear of not being received well by their peers. Heather stated more than once that she was skeptical about being able to be vulnerable when she was angry or someone else was angry. Sam was concerned about trying the skills with her classmate during recess. Although she did eventually try an I-message, her fears were realized when the classmate fulfilled her expectations of being rebuffed.

What is needed is a culture of safety and risk taking at the same time. A school needs to provide a secure place to try new strategies for working together and solving problems. This means that the adults need to be ready to arbitrate only when necessary, mediate to support student problem-solving, and allow for student-led negotiation whenever possible.

> It would appear then that a key feature of pupil empowerment may not be schools with pupil empowerment initiatives but rather schools that create the conditions in which pupil empowerment initiatives thrive. (Sellman, 2011, p. 58)

Lindsay (1998) provides six factors for high-quality non-violent conflict intervention programs. One of these is support from school administrators who understand the conflict resolution philosophy, and who encourage teachers to use and integrate it into their curriculum. Another is high-quality training and refresher courses for all the staff. Both of these factors would help to create a culture that is safe for vulnerability.

It is imperative that such cultures are created in schools. While teachers work hard to make sure students are safe and are learning, teacher arbitration denies our students the opportunity to learn one of life's more important lessons, to take care of oneself.

> Self- regulation is the ability to act in socially approved ways in the absence of external monitoring by others. It is a central and significant hallmark of cognitive, social, and moral development. The opposite of self-regulation is adult monitoring and control. When adults in the children's lives act as referees and judges, adults place children in a dependent position and deprive them of opportunities to learn valuable self-regulation and social skills" (Johnson, D., & Johnson, R., 1995, p. 435)

For students to learn to self-regulate, they need a safe place to try and develop those skills. There was some evidence that the culture of the classroom built through the unit was spreading to the other class, as evidenced by Molly's and Abby's story during the last focus group. Possibly movement was made in creating the culture needed for conflict transformation to take root.

Perspective in the Literature

My interest in empowering children to solve their problems independently led me to the research on non-violent conflict intervention in schools. The existing research was clear that incorporating conflict resolution training and/or peer mediation programs would lower incidents of violence and improve relationships among all school stakeholders (Aceves et al., 2010; Cunningham et al., 1998; Lane-Garon & Richardson, 2003; MacEvoy & Asher, 2012; Stevahn et al., 2000; Stevahn et al., 2002).

I drew several conclusions regarding student experience with the unit based on the conflict transformation framework that support the conclusions from existing literature. First, students enjoy the interactive pedagogy of the unit. They enjoyed brainstorming and discussing real life problems. They enjoyed the role-play skits, even asking to do more of them. They enjoyed writing bucket notes for their classmates, and not just their friends. They saw the value in making someone else feel good about themselves, checking mailboxes to ensure that no one was left without a bucket note. Children are not always sensitive to how their actions affect others, but when it is pointed out they want to make amends. When Paul and Peter's attention was drawn to how their actions were upsetting Wes, they finally decided to work cooperatively with him. As the existing literature claims, non-violent conflict intervention programs improve relationships among students and improve the general morale of the classroom.

A second conclusion to be drawn from this study is that using common tools to teach different content strengthens learning, as does making connections across content and applying concepts to other contexts. Using the conflict escalator helped Mrs. F to later talk again about cause and effect. Using pro/con lists from the curriculum helped me to discuss different perspectives of an issue and understanding another's point of view. Discussing how conflicts

were handled in books the students were reading independently and in books I read out loud reinforced what students were learning about the nature of conflict. As the existing literature claims, integrating non-violent conflict intervention education into the regular classroom curriculum improves understanding of both content areas.

None of the existing literature addressed conflict transformation as a framework to guide the educational aspects or the analysis of the findings. This is important because conflict management, conflict resolution, and peer mediation, although a part of the non-violent conflict intervention family, are different from conflict transformation in very important ways. Different from conflict management, conflict transformation looks to transform the conflict into something new. Different from conflict resolution, conflict transformation looks beyond the mere cessation of the conflict, to how solutions impact future situations. Additionally, conflict transformation considers four categories of factors that affect the conflict: personal, relational, cultural, and structural. None of the other approaches to conflict intentionally consider these factors. This unit was specifically designed to have a future orientation and consider the factors that shape the conflict. Some of these factors are outside the control of children.

Focusing this study on conflict transformation allowed me to identify the complexity of conflict in students' lives. In order to address conflict with vulnerability, students need to feel safe. School structures, cultural expectations, strength of peer and teacher relationships, and personal insecurities all contribute to a student's perception of safety. Conflict transformation informs the educational community that it is not enough to address each conflict in isolation. Schools are systems. When a disturbance occurs in one part of the system, the effects ripple out and impact other parts of the system. The conflict transformation framework illuminates these connections.

Perspective of the Researcher

The majority of the existing research was quantitative in approach. Each study showed how a different non-violent conflict intervention program improved the culture of the school. Some of the studies counted this improvement in fewer office referrals, some in fewer suspensions. Some of the studies measured the improvement through student and teacher surveys or ability to use the skills in fabricated vignettes. There was a dearth of literature that asked the students directly what they thought about conflict or its resolution. Student empowerment comes through students sharing their voice. It was important to hear students in their own words describe their thoughts and feelings as they were experiencing the educational unit and being asked to apply the concepts in their lives. A qualitative approach was required to achieve this.

I spent over 100 hours with the students, interacting with them as a teacher and observing them. I watched them interact with their peers and the adults in their school. I read their journals and assessed their assignments. I came to know the students and they became comfortable with me. The relationship I created with them provided an opportunity to hear their feedback as we were in the midst of the lesson and to observe how the lessons were or were not taken outside the classroom. By being present, I witnessed first-hand the struggle Wes, Paul, and Peter had to work together. Seeing Wes turn red and calling the other boys' attention to his distress was central to their understanding of the conflict and how to address it. I heard the tremble in Sue's voice as we talked through her struggle with her classmate which helped in interpreting her trepidation. And then I could see the exuberance she felt later after using her skills, even when she was not received as she had hoped. I fielded Heather's insightful questions about managing her feelings when others would not listen to her. These questions and discussion helped me understand that students were thinking seriously about the concepts, not just accepting my word

that these skills were important or would help them. These experiences could not have been captured in a survey or pre/post-test.

Student empowerment is about helping students think and act in positive ways independently because they see the value in it. If they only follow the rules and stay out of trouble because someone else has coerced them, then no growth or ownership in that way of thinking and behaving has been achieved. Education is about helping students grow and develop into happy, whole, contributing members of society. To achieve this, we must help our students see, understand, and think about themselves as happy, whole, contributing members of society. Going beyond immediate solutions and situations to analyze the whole situation and consider the future will help us achieve this desired end.

Further Research

At the conclusion of this study new questions emerged. One area for further research is to determine how students imagine the future. What do they consider? On what do they base their imaginings? The ability to envision a new future is central to Inquiry 2 of the conflict transformation framework. I have done activities in the past with classes about utopian communities. In reviewing their conceptions of the future, I realized that many times students used existing structures and tools. They appeared to be limited by things they had already witnessed and experienced. An example of this is a former sixth-grade student who created a future with more armed police in order to keep everyone safe, instead of imagining a future where police officers would not be needed because we lived in peace. An area of study might be to determine if Inquiry 2 can be operationalized with children. Are they developmentally capable of imagining a future that would look entirely different from anything they have experienced?

Another possibility for future study could be related to what would be involved in establishing a school culture where the conflict transformation framework could shape daily interaction. This framework is different than other non-violent conflict intervention approaches in that it requires a higher level of vulnerability. What kind of school culture would be safe for this level of vulnerability? How is it created and how long does it take to create it? The impact social media has on this culture would be an important factor to consider. Once this is better understood, the secondary question of this study regarding the long term effects of teaching lessons based on conflict transformation could be explored.

Finally, this study raises interesting questions about a child's experience with emotional vulnerability and resiliency. What constitutes a safe place for a child's vulnerability? How does resiliency impact their willingness to engage in vulnerable conflict intervention practices? How can teachers and administrators help create these places and help students become more comfortable with taking risks repeatedly? Relationships take time and patience to build and maintain. How can schools become places where students can take chances, make mistakes and try again at this very important life skill, building healthy relationships?

Summary

Students enjoy learning about conflict and how to address it, but they have concerns that prohibit them from using the new skills outside the classroom. They expressed concerns about others laughing at them or not listening to them. An integral component to Lederach's conflict transformation framework is the ability to imagine a different future. Student's fear of being vulnerable impedes their ability to do this fully. They seem unable to imagine an outcome where using their conflict intervention skills would be met with openness and a desire to resolve the problem unless an adult is present.

The conflict transformation framework expands upon the other non-violent conflict intervention processes in important ways. Other approaches are primarily concerned with stopping the immediate episode of conflict and do not consider the deeper context surrounding the conflict. Students were able to analyze conflict within personal, relational, cultural, and structural contexts in discussion.

Lederach's (2003) framework also enlarged the already well-developed literature base on non-violent conflict intervention in schools. Previously, no research had been done using the framework in schools. Additionally, the vast majority of existing research on non-violent conflict intervention was quantitative in nature. This qualitative study helped to clarify student thinking about conflict and the processes of resolution.

The conflict transformation framework is important because it works toward a deeper understanding of conflict and longer lasting solutions. Students benefit as the complexity of their struggles are accepted and understood so that they can build stronger, healthier relationships with themselves and others. These are important factors in living whole, healthy lives.

Appendix A

Schedule of Visits and Lessons

	Lesson	Materials
	1/13 What is Conflict? Starting with week 2 in the Reading Curriculum Create Conflict collages – groups, cut-out picks from magazines Review definition of inference What can we infer about conflict from our collages? Make statements such as… • Conflict is natural • Conflict is between people • Etc. Plant metaphor Iceberg metaphor	Poster board Scissors Magazines Glue Markers iPad
	1/15 Conflict Cause/Effect Cause/Effect – review – what are key words that show cause/effect? • Read aloud o Analyze conflict in the story – escalator – both ways • In pairs read story and complete escalator	Read aloud Escalator worksheet Story
	1/20 Conflict Complexity Create a class word web "Conflict" • Code causes and effects in the web Conflict is really complex Brainstorm conflicts experienced in class Choose a conflict from the class and map it. Identify the conflict in the main circle Sub ideas – "players" "causes" "effects" Draw lines to show connections	Poster paper Markers Conflict web worksheets Ink pad Paper for thumbprint labeled with names

	and impact In pairs – use a short story and create a web that shows the complexity of the conflict To prepare for art project take fingerprints of each student, label with their name.	
	1/22 Identity Who we are determines how we approach conflicts Brainstorm – What is included in an identity? Personality Beliefs What's important to you Gender What you like or don't like Family dynamics How does each of these things on the list determine how one might deal with conflict? If you're outgoing how will you approach conflict? If you believe that hitting is wrong how will you approach conflict? Who Am I? art project	Poster paper Markers Art project materials - http://www.eatock.com/project/holley-portraits/ Examples Enlarged thumbprints Copy paper Thin colored markers Tape iPad
	1/27 Response to Conflict **Unit 7.Week 2.Day 2** Expository Text Structure Do you Agree line – After reading Copycats do you agree, disagree or are you not sure about whether cloning should be allowed? • Have students get up and go stand in designated place in the classroom • On a scale of 1-5 how strongly do you feel about your position? 1 not very, 5 very much Return to your seat – Brainstorm so other controversial subjects going on right now When people feel really strongly about a position what are some ways they react?	Student Response book

	Fight or flight – give some examples Identifying Pros/Cons of a situation, even when you feel strongly about a position can help you see another perspective. How might be seeing the other side's perspective change the way the conflict is resolved? Reread Copycats and discuss in groups – Student Response book Pages 38-39 What are some ways that cloning might help people? What are some ways that cloning might be dangerous? Quick Write First describe your position on cloning. Then discuss the opposite position.	
	1/29 Focus Group	Recording device Questions snacks
	2/3 Identifying Feelings February 5 **Unit 7.Week 2.Day 2** Review All girls/All boys article – student response book P 42-43 Highlight evidence in pairs Discuss the article as a class Discuss the author's point of view Feelings are part of point of view When you feel strongly about an issue or event how does that effect the way you approach the conflict? Brainstorm feeling words – make faces for each word Which feelings are most difficult to work with during conflict? No feelings are bad. The way we manage them can have destructive or constructive outcomes. Introduce Feelings journal	Student response book Highlighters Poster paper Markers Feelings journals
	2/5 Feelings Feburary 10 **Unit 7.Week 2.Day 4** Do you agree line – should kids have cell phones?	Bucket book Bucket notes iPad

	How strongly do you feel about this position 1-5? What is the author's point of view? What information did the author use to support his/her point of view? How do you think the author feels about it? How do your parents feel about it? Sometimes people's feelings about an issue are related to how they feel about each other. Read Aloud – Fill My Bucket How does filling someone's bucket affect the way they approach a conflict? We limit TV time at home but Katy loves to watch. It's a conflict. She often asks to fold laundry and watch TV as a trade. Had to stop doing that because she would watch more than fold. One day came home and she had folded all laundry, emptied dishwasher and loaded it, vacuumed on her own. Before she asked I told her she could watch TV. She had filled my bucket. How can you fill the bucket of your classmates, family, teacher? Pass out Bucket notes – write one for someone. Remind them about feelings journal	
	2/10 Teacher Interview 1 February 12	Recording device questions
	2/12 I-messages February 12 **Unit 7.Week 3.Day 4** Filling a person's bucket and thinking about an issue from someone else's point of view are helpful approaches to conflict. Sometimes our feelings are really strong and need to be addressed with the other person. Review feelings words list Introduce I-messages vs. you messages I feel… When you… I would like…	iPad

	Choose a conflict and practice in pairs. Brainstorm a list of conflicts Choose a conflict. In groups act them out, using an I-message - video	
	2/17 Active Listening – Empathy/Rephrasing **Unit 7.Week4.Day 2** Discuss rephrasing – saying what you heard in your own words Review and Introduce the Reading Read Aloud with Brief Section Introductions – have student rephrase the reading each time Rephrasing is an important listening skill Brainstorm other listening skills – how do you know when someone is listening to you? Practice – in pairs – tell each other a story and then rephrase - video	Video camera/iPad
0	**2/19 ABCD Method** **Unit 7.Week 4.Day 4** Define Win/Win vs. Win/Lose vs. Lose/Lose – give an example All these ideas we've talked about in approaching conflict lead up to solving conflicts for win/win solutions: ABCD Method - 6 Step Negotiation procedure Ask – What's the problem? Do you want to solve it? How do I feel? What do I want? Why? How do you feel? What do you want? Why? 1. Recognize that a conflict exists and express a desire to resolve it constructively. 2. State what you want and give your underlying reasons 3. Express how you feel 4. Communicate your understanding of what the other person wants and why	Poster for ABCD steps ABCD worksheet for Native American debate ABCD worksheet for class conflict

	Brainstorm – Let's think of all the ways we could both get what we want. 5. Invent three or more optional solutions that maximize mutual gain Choose/Do – Which is the best way for us to both get what we want? 6. Reaching an agreement by selecting and shaking hands on one of the options Choose a conflict from the class list Work through the process together Partner Read Chapters 6-7 In groups of 4 – 2 people represent the US govt and 2 people represent the Native Americans Work through the ABCD process regarding having Native Americans go to boarding school – worksheet to help Choose a conflict from the list – in pairs fill out a worksheet to work through the conflict together	
1	**Feb 24.** Integrative Negotiation Creative Writing – Alternative Endings	
2	**March 3** Either/or vs. both/and Videos of Role Play	
	March 5 Focus Group #2 Teacher Interview #2	

Description of Physical Artifacts

Group brainstorm. Several times over the course of unit the class's thoughts were recorded on either the white board or poster paper. These thoughts were recorded digitally by taking a picture and either transcribed or uploaded directly into the to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Conflict posters. During the first lesson students were asked to work in table groups of four to create a collage on a piece of poster board from pictures they chose from magazines to represent their understanding of conflict. I took a picture of each of these posters and stored them digitally. Then I described each poster in a document for the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Conflict escalator. After reading *A Hateful of Trouble* (Kreidler et al., 1995) aloud students completed a conflict escalator graphic organizer in small groups. These were collected, photographed, copied to word and uploaded to Dedoose.

Conflict webs. As part of a lesson about cause and effect the class created a web to illustrate the connections between players, causes, and effects in a conflict. Each of these main concepts was represented by a circle and students brainstormed sub ideas for concept. Then as a class they decided which sub ideas should be connected between the main ideas. This web was recorded on the white board. During lunch it was erased. Upon returning from lunch students were asked to recreate the web in small groups on a graphic organizer I provided to them. The webs were transcribed into to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Fingerprints. I provided the students with some broad categories that define identity. The class then identified sub descriptors for each category. This was recorded on a piece of poster paper. Then I asked students to make a list of statements that were true about themselves that addressed the categories and to include their stance on conflict. When this was completed I handed them an enlarged copy of their personal fingerprint. (I had collected fingerprints the week prior to this visit.) I also gave them a piece of tracing paper and some thin markers. They were asked to transpose the statements regarding their identity onto the tracing paper, lining their

words up with the lines of their finger print. These were collected, digitally photographed and then described in a document in the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014)..

Pro/Con lists. These lists were created after students had read an article from their curriculum regarding cloning organized into pros and cons. They had discussed their position with other students and created a pro/con list about the article in groups. The list I collected was completed individually about a topic of their choice.

Feelings Journals. I provided a template for students to keep track of their feelings, what triggered the feelings and how they responded to it. This was distributed during visit 6 and then they were encouraged to work on it independently outside of class. I also provided time to update it at each subsequent visit. During visit 11 I assigned a writing prompt as homework. Students were asked to look over their journals and answer the following questions (a) what was the most common feeling you had; (b) what was you most common response to that feeling; (c) what will you do in the future when you have that feeling. The pages from the journal were photographed, copied into a word documents and uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).for analysis. The answers to the homework questions were recorded as a memo on each file in the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014)..

Bucket notes. During week 7 I introduced the idea of bucket notes. Based off the book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* (McCloud, 2006), students used a template to write something they appreciated about someone else. They delivered these notes to students in their classroom mailboxes. Notes that were written to me were photograph, copied to a word document and uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

I-message practice skits. After being introduced to I-messages students were asked to practice using I-messages for conflicts from a list brainstormed by the class with a partner. The interactions were recorded on an iPad and then transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Written I-messages. After practicing with a partner, students were asked to write an I-message for a conflict of their choice on a piece of paper. These were collected, photographed, copied into a word document and uploaded to the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Final Role Plays. Student small groups were asked to develop a conflict skit. They chose the conflict but were asked to use the ABCD method, including I-messages and rephrasing, to solve the conflict they chose. These skits were recorded on the iPad and then transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Reflections. At the conclusion of the final lesson students were asked to write a final reflection on what they had learned in the unit about conflict. These were collected and transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014)..

Thank you notes. The students were asked by the classroom teacher to write thank you notes to me. Some of these notes were transcribed into the computer analysis program (Dedoose, 2014).

Appendix B

Conflict Coding

Date _____

Student Name A			Student Name B			Student Name C			Student Name D		
onf. Type	es Type	rb?	onf. Type	es Type	rb?	onf. Type	es Type	rb?	onf. Type	es Type	rb?

Adapted 5 Types of Conflict (Deutsch, 1977)

1. Control of resources
2. Difference in preferences
3. Differences in values or beliefs – what should be or what is
4. Difference in the nature of relationships between the individuals involved – dominance, friendship

Adapted from Types of Resolution (Johnson, Johnson, Cotten, Harris, et al., 1995)

A. No agreement/Avoidance of each other
B. Forgiving and apologizing
C. Win/Lose – Distributive negotiation
D. Win/Win – Integrative negotiation

3rd Party Arbitration

Y – Yes
N - No

For each conflict event three codes were given. The first code refers to the content of the conflict. It answered the question, "What is the conflict about?" The second code refers to the resolution strategy. It answered the question, "How was the conflict resolved?" And the third code refers to whether the conflict was arbitrated by an adult.

Appendix C

Focus Group 1
Fifth-grade Student Experience with Conflict Transformation
Establishing "Episode & Epicenter" (Lederach, 2003)

Focus Group Questions
Opening: introductions • Ground rules o Listen to what others are saying and respond to them as well as to the question o Respect each other. If you disagree you can say so but don't put someone else down. "I disagree with so and so because…" is okay. • Please say your name and one word that describes yourself
Introductory Questions: 1. What is something you think of when someone says the word "conflict?" 2. What do you think…How do you feel about the statement "conflict is good?"
Transfer Questions: 1. What kinds of conflicts do you have at school? 2. What causes conflicts at school? 3. How does conflict with your classmates affect your learning?
Key Questions: 1. What kinds of people do you get into conflicts with? 2. What do you think about when you have a conflict? 3. What actions do you take in order to solve your conflict?
Specific Questions: 1. How do your conflicts usually end? 2. What does a good ending look like, feel like, sound like? 3. What does a bad ending look like, feel like, sound like? 4. How do these conflicts affect your relationships with your classmates? 5. If you stop the conflict does this affect your relationship with your classmates differently than when the teacher stops it? 6. How does the conflict ending feel differently when you stop it versus when a teacher stops it?
Closing Questions: 1. What is most important to know about solving conflicts? 2. Why?
Final question – 1. Is there something we should have talked about today that we didn't? 2. Is there anything else you would like to add? 3. Thank you for your comments. (treat)

Appendix D

Focus Group 2
Impact of Non-Violent Conflict Intervention Processes on Students Imagining the "Future" (Lederach, 2003)

Focus Group Questions
Opening: introductions • Ground rules - reminders o Listen to what others are saying and respond to them as well as to the question o Respect each other. If you disagree you can say so but don't put someone else down. "I disagree with so and so because…" is okay.
Introductory Questions: 3. How does conflict affect how you feel/think about school? 4. What are some of the same things that happen over and over again in your conflicts?
Transfer Questions: 1. Tell me about a conflict that ended with a win-win solution. 2. How have you used I-messages in your conflicts? 3. How have you used the ABCD method in your conflicts? 4. How have you used the emotional bank account in your conflicts? 5. How have you used listening in your conflicts?
Key Questions: 4. When you get into a conflict what do you want out of it? 5. How do you want it to end? **6.** Do the endings you want change depending on who you are in conflict with? 7. How?
Specific Questions: **7.** What difference have you noticed in your relationships with other students and with your teacher since using those strategies? **8.** How do school rules affect the way you solve conflict with your classmates? **9.** How does the way recess is organized affect the way you solve conflict with your classmates? **10.** How does the way teaching time in the classroom is organized affect the way you solve conflicts with your classmates?
Closing Questions: 3. What is most important to know about solving conflicts? 4. Why?
Final question – 4. Is there something we should have talked about today that we didn't? 5. Is there anything else you would like to add? 6. Thank you for your comments. (Treat)

Appendix E

Teacher Interview
Fifth-grade students' experience with Conflict Transformation

Interview 1 – Establishing the Episode/Epicenter

1. How are you experiencing the peace education unit?
2. What beliefs do you hold about conflict in the classroom?
    a. What role does conflict play in your classroom?
    b. How does conflict in the classroom affect you and your teaching?
    c. How does it affect students and their learning?
    d. How does conflict impact relationships in your classroom?
    e. How have these beliefs changed since the beginning of the unit?
3. How do you address conflict in your classroom?
4. What are the issues that most often cause conflicts in your classroom?
5. What patterns do you see regarding conflicts that occur in your classroom?
6. How do cultural factors (race/ethnicity, SES, rural vs urban) influence the conflicts that occur in your classroom?
7. What else you would like to say?

Interview 2 – Imagining the Future

1. Describe your experience with the peace education unit.
2. How would you describe a conflict that is resolved well? One that is poorly resolved? One that is unresolved? What do these look like, sound like, feel like from your perspective?
3. How does the structure of the school, public education and/or the classroom impact conflicts that occur between children in your classroom?
4. How does the structure of the school, public education and/or the classroom impact solutions to conflict that occur between children in your classroom?
5. How will your experience with the peace education unit affect your future practice?
6. What else you would like to say?

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